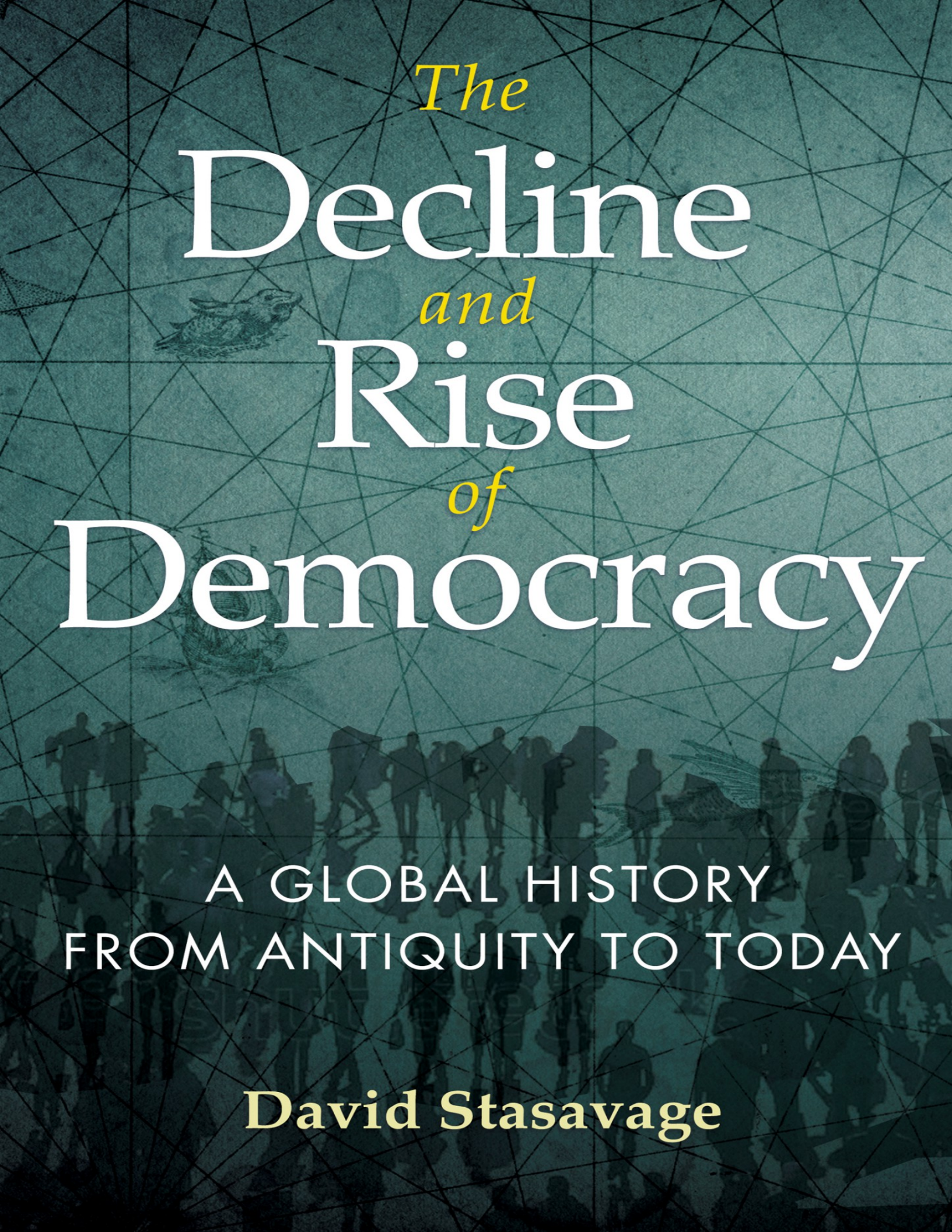

The
Decline
and
Rise
of
Democracy
A GLOBAL HISTORY
FROM ANTIQUITY TO TODAY
David Stasavage

THE DECLINE AND RISE OF DEMOCRACY

THE PRINCETON ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

Joel Mokyr, Series Editor

A list of titles in this series appears in the back of the book.

The Decline and Rise of Democracy

A GLOBAL HISTORY FROM ANTIQUITY TO TODAY

DAVID STASAVAGE

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON & OXFORD

Copyright © 2020 by Princeton University Press

Requests for permission to reproduce material from this work should be sent to permissions@press.princeton.edu

Published by Princeton University Press
41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540
6 Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1TR

press.princeton.edu

All Rights Reserved
ISBN 978-0-691-17746-5
ISBN (e-book) 978-0-691-20195-5

Version 1.0

Library of Congress Control Number 2020932776

British Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available

Editorial: Bridget Flannery-McCoy & Alena Chekanov
Production Editorial: Ali Parrington
Jacket/Cover Design: Leslie Flis

Jacket images: Shutterstock

For my parents
Barbara and Gerry

CONTENTS

List of Figures ix
Preface xi

PART I. EARLY DEMOCRACY 1

1 Origins of Democratic Rule 3
2 Early Democracy Was Widespread 29
3 Weak States Inherited Democracy 62
4 When Technology Undermined Democracy 79

PART II. THE DIVERGENCE 99

5 The Development of Representation in Europe 101
6 China as the Bureaucratic Alternative 138
7 How Democracy Disappeared in the Islamic World 166
8 Democracy and Economic Development over the Long Run 181

PART III. MODERN DEMOCRACY 195

9 Why England Was Different 197
10 Democracy—and Slavery—in America 225
11 The Spread of Modern Democracy 256
12 The Ongoing Democratic Experiment 296

Acknowledgments 309
Notes 311
Bibliography 349
Index 391

FIGURES

1.1. Fiscal extraction across three regions
2.1. A map of Huronia
2.2. A section of the Codex Mendoza
2.3. The Azande Kingdom
2.4. Council governance across regions
3.1. Caloric variability and council governance
3.2. Population density and council governance among Native Americans
3.3. Military democracy
3.4. Bureaucrats and councils as alternatives
3.5. Crop yields in early societies
4.1. A Chinese “fish scale” map
4.2. Aztec soil glyphs
4.3. Writing and early democracy
5.1. Variability of crop yields in medieval England and ancient Sumeria
5.2. Rediscovering Aristotle did not lead to city republics
5.3. Total solar irradiance and city-state development
6.1. Percentage of total land area cultivated in China
6.2. Percentage of cultivated land irrigated in China
6.3. State revenues in China and England
7.1. The Circle of Justice
8.1. GDP estimates over time
8.2. Ruler duration across six dynasties
8.3. Urbanization and representative assemblies
9.1. King John’s heavy exactions in comparative perspective
9.2. Patents in England and the Netherlands
10.1. Report of the First General Assembly of Virginia
10.2. British living standards in comparison

10.3. Newspapers in the Early Republic
11.1. The rise of modern democracy
11.2. One man, one gun, one vote
11.3. Wealth inequality and universal suffrage in France
11.4. State revenues and democracy in Africa

PREFACE

WHERE DOES DEMOCRACY come from, how is it sustained, and what is its future? These are questions that have a special salience today in our current age of democratic anxiety. The United States has long been heralded as a successful democratic experiment and a lesson for others; if people once thought that republics had to be small to survive, the American experience seemed to have shown otherwise. In more recent decades, as the practice of selecting leaders in free elections spread around the globe, democracy acquired an aura of inevitability, as if it was the wave of the future, at least for those who would listen. Today some fear that all of these conclusions were far too optimistic—democracy itself may be less durable than they once thought, and even when it does survive it may be captured by the few at the expense of the many.

To understand where we are today—and where we might be headed—we need to broaden our view to look at the deep history of democracy, and that is what I will propose we do in this book. I have been researching and writing on this subject for twenty years, particularly by working on the long evolution of representative institutions in Europe. In recent years I began to think more explicitly about comparing world regions. Why, I asked, has Europe followed a fundamentally different political trajectory from China or the Middle East? While many scholars have written about the economic divergence that saw Europe become the first region to industrialize, fewer people have tried to explain the great political divergence. That will be one important goal of this book, and in pursuing it we will need to consider not only democracy but also the logic of autocracy—the opposite form of governance.

As we consider a broad range of human societies, it will turn out that events in "out of the way" places and at distant times can sometimes tell us surprising things about our own political institutions of today. Democracy often thrived in places where we would least expect it. As part of this, we will learn that the story of democracy has not only been one of great

thinkers writing great books; it has also been constructed by ordinary people working pragmatically to govern themselves in a collective fashion.

Finally, as we consider in this book how our own contemporary democracies have evolved, we will have a better sense of their potential points of both strength and weakness. The particular institutions that we use to govern ourselves today are to a great extent the result of a long development of Anglo-American practices that was as much the product of circumstance as any natural evolution. The democracy we have today is but one potential way of organizing things, and in closing I will suggest that once we recognize this, we will be in a better position to consider how it might evolve in the future.

PART I

Early Democracy

1

Origins of Democratic Rule

WE ARE TAUGHT that Europeans invented democracy. We learn that it was invented by the Greeks, who gave us the word itself, and we hear also that democracy in Greece died out after about as much time as the American Republic has existed. Democracy then gradually reemerged in Europe during a long evolution beginning with events like Magna Carta and the rise of Italian city republics. It culminated in the establishment of political systems based on competitive elections and universal suffrage. The practice of democracy eventually spread to other continents.

One problem with this story is that when Europeans began conquering peoples on other continents, they sometimes found that local people had political institutions that were more democratic than what they knew in their home countries. In North America, as French Jesuit missionaries entered the territory of the people they called the Huron, they discovered a political system based on both central and local councils with broad participation—including for women. In the year 1636 one missionary commented that the Huron central council was like the "Estates General" of the country.[1] His home country of France also had an Estates General, but it had not met for over twenty years, and it would not meet again until 1789. In Mesoamerica, Spanish conquerors more commonly encountered societies with hierarchical political systems—but not always. In 1519 as Hernán Cortés entered the territory of Tlaxcala he observed that as far as he could judge, the form of government was "almost like that of Venice, or Genoa, or Pisa, because there is no one supreme ruler."[2] His home country of Spain had such a single supreme ruler, King Charles I.

The examples of the Huron and of Tlaxcala are not isolated exceptions. Throughout human history many societies on multiple continents have independently developed political systems in which those who rule have been obliged to seek consent from those they govern. If we see seeking

consent as a basic ingredient of democracy, then we can say that democracy itself occurs naturally among humans, even if it is far from inevitable. The question then becomes when and why democratic practices survive and prosper, and why this happened even in places where people had not read Aristotle.

The other question we need to ask is if early forms of democracy existed in many regions, then why did modern democracy—the selection of representatives through universal suffrage—emerge first in Europe and the United States? The answer, I will argue, has to do with the particular trajectory taken by Europe when compared with regions such as China and the Middle East. Ironically, it was Europe's backwardness that laid the ground for the rise of modern democracy.

Early Democracy and Modern Democracy

In its original sense as used by the Greeks the word "democracy" simply means that the people govern, or more literally that the people have power. Each citizen participates, and the people as a collective rule.[3] In the middle of the twentieth century, one scholar described the indigenous societies of southern Africa as having a "peculiar type of democracy."[4] Free election of leaders was unknown, but tribal chiefs had to rule collectively with assemblies and councils that constrained their actions: the people, or a subset of them, participated in governance. Rather than calling this system "peculiar," I will call it "early democracy." This term is useful because early democracy differed from the modern form of democracy that we are familiar with today.

Early democracy existed in lieu of a state bureaucracy. It was a system in which a ruler governed jointly with a council or assembly composed of members of society who were themselves independent from the ruler and not subject to his or her whim. They provided information while also assisting with governance. In some early democracies rulers were selected by a council; in others heredity played the primary role. Some councils in early democracies involved broad participation by the community, but it was on other occasions a more elite gathering. For those who had the right, participation took a deep and frequent form.

Early democracy was so common in all regions of the globe that we should see it as a naturally occurring condition in human societies. I am not the first person to say something like this, but I will try to provide a new and more comprehensive view of this idea while also showing when and why early democracy prevailed.[5] Athens, as well as many other democracies in ancient Greece, presents us with the most extensive example of early democracy, but there have been many other societies elsewhere in which early democracy was also the order of the day. This was true even if participation was not as extensive as in Athens. Examples of early democracy include those among the Huron and in Tlaxcala to which I have already referred. We will also see examples from ancient Mesopotamia, precolonial Central Africa, ancient India, and elsewhere.

Modern democracy differs from early democracy in several important ways. It is a political system in which representatives are chosen in competitive elections under universal suffrage. With universal adult suffrage, political participation is very broad, but in modern democracy popular participation in governance is also more episodic than in early democracy. Representatives meet frequently to engage in governance, but the broader populace does not participate directly, apart from at election time. Episodic participation is the first fracture point of modern democracy because it can produce citizen distrust and disengagement; there must be continual efforts to overcome this problem. The second fracture point of modern democracy is that it coexists with a state bureaucracy that manages day-to-day affairs, and the risk of this is that the people may no longer believe that they themselves are governing. This will be less likely to occur if democratic practices emerge before the creation of a state bureaucracy—then rulers and the people can build a bureaucracy jointly. But if bureaucracy comes first, this is less likely to happen, and this means that bureaucracy can either substitute for or complement modern democracy. It all depends on the sequence of events.

If early democracy arose independently in many human societies, modern democracy is a more specifically European invention. Early democracy was a form of rule that proved durable over thousands of years. Modern democracy is something much more recent, and we should think of it as an ongoing experiment. To understand when and why this experiment will succeed, we need to first consider how both early and modern democracy emerged.

Origins of Early Democracy

Early democracy emerged when rulers needed consent and cooperation from their people because they could not govern on their own. People had the opportunity to voice their consent or opposition in some form of an assembly or council. All rulers—both democratic and autocratic—need at least tacit consent from their people by not revolting, but consent in early democracy was not tacit: it was active.[6] In early democracy, even if a council of the governed had no formal prerogative to veto decisions taken by a ruler, it could still exercise power if its members possessed information that a ruler did not.[7]

Three underlying factors helped lead to early democracy. It was first of all more prevalent in small-scale settings. We see this whether we speak of polities in Europe, in precolonial Africa, or in North America prior to European conquest. Small scale made it possible for members of a society to regularly attend the councils and assemblies that were the lifeblood of early democracy. In some early democracies having a system of representation helped confront this problem of scale: instead of having all attend, choose one person. But individual representatives still needed to travel to an assembly, and constituents still needed to monitor them once they were there, and when people were spread over a large area this was more difficult. Representation was an adaptation to the problem of scale, but it did not solve it.[8]

The second factor that led to early democracy was when rulers lacked knowledge of what people were producing.[9] This gave them an incentive to share power to better know what sort of taxes they could levy. We should think of "taxation" in broad terms here—the problem was faced by any ruler who sought to appropriate or redistribute economic resources. Features of the natural environment sometimes drove uncertainty, as they made agricultural production harder to predict.[10] In other cases, rulers faced uncertainty because they lacked a state bureaucracy that could measure and assess production. Throughout history, uncertainty of this sort has been a great problem in taxation for rulers. Form an overly pessimistic judgment of how much you can tax, and you will be forgoing potential revenue; form an

overly optimistic judgment of how much you can tax, and you risk provoking either a revolt or an exit of your population.

The third factor that led to early democracy involved the balance between how much rulers needed their people and how much people could do without their rulers. When rulers had a greater need for revenue, they were more likely to accept governing in a collaborative fashion, and this was even more likely if they needed people to fight wars. With inadequate means of simply compelling people to fight, rulers offered them political rights. The flip side of all this was that whenever the populace found it easier to do without a particular ruler—say by moving to a new location—then rulers felt compelled to govern more consensually. The idea that exit options influence hierarchy is, in fact, so general it also applies to species other than humans. Among species as diverse as ants, birds, and wasps, social organization tends to be less hierarchical when the costs of what biologists call "dispersal" are low.[11]

Over time, early democracy persisted in some societies, but it died out in many others. It did so as societies grew in scale; it also did so as rulers acquired new ways of monitoring production; it did so finally when people found it hard to exit to new areas. It is for all these reasons that the title of this book refers first to a decline in early democracy and then to the rise of modern democracy.

Is Early Democracy an Appropriate Term?

Those familiar with classical Greek thought may fear that my definition of early democracy is an overly broad one. The Greeks distinguished between rule by the one, the few, or the many, and for them the word *demokratia* was only associated with rule by the many, typically in a large assembly.[12] Rule by the few was oligarchy, and it took place in the form of a council with limited participation. Even if governance under oligarchy had a collective air to it, this was not democracy as the Greeks would have understood it. Scholars have used the assembly versus council division to distinguish empirically between democracies and oligarchies.[13]

So why do I adopt a definition of early democracy that the Greeks would have seen as including both democracies and oligarchies? I do this because many human societies that at first blush appear to have had rule by the few also had participation by the many. In some of the early democracies that I will describe, a small number of individuals participated directly in governance, but they had to then face an assembly or council in the locality in which they resided. Among the Huron, only chiefs attended central councils, but they would face another council in their home village. In other societies the few would ordinarily make decisions, but on other occasions there was much broader discussion and consultation.[14] This was the case in the towns of the Mesopotamian kingdom of Mari.[15] This phenomenon was also known in the Greek world, and it would come to be called a mixed constitution. Those who have catalogued the political regimes of Greek cities have found many examples of mixed constitutions, and they have also attested to the fact that it is often difficult to classify a polis as clearly oligarchic versus clearly democratic—almost every Greek polis had some elements of these two regimes.[16] Aristotle himself spoke of cities that mixed oligarchy and democracy.[17] To me all this sounds as if the barrier between oligarchy and democracy was a very porous one.

For all of these reasons it makes sense to adopt a broad definition of early democracy. As I do so, I will take care to emphasize the diversity within the group of early democracies. Some had popular participation that was very extensive while in others this was more limited.

The Autocratic Alternative

Autocracy was the alternative to early democracy. Since it is impossible in almost any society for someone to truly rule on their own, successful autocracy was aided by the construction of a state bureaucracy. Rather than rely on members of society to help provide information and collect revenue, autocrats created bureaucracies staffed with subordinates they themselves had selected and they themselves controlled. This was fundamentally different from relying on a council or assembly composed of members of society not subject to the ruler's whim. Bureaucrats could be sent out to assess what people were producing and how much they could be taxed, and they could also collect the taxes. They could also be used to enforce a system of conscription without having to give people political rights. Behind all this lay the reality of military force—autocrats needed to hire and pay specialists in violence. Some of the autocracies I will consider were very efficient and others much less so, but in all cases, they were a clear alternative to early democracy.

Opting for the autocratic alternative also depended on the mastery of techniques generally associated with civilization. The most important of these was having a system of writing so that bureaucrats could communicate across distances and over time. In chapter 3 I will provide evidence of where writing came from, showing that there were both demand and supply elements to this story. Writing was more likely to emerge when societies had a need for it, such as when they grew storable crops that could be recorded. But there was also an important supply element because inventing a system of writing from scratch is no easy task. Writing was more likely to be adopted by societies that found themselves near neighbors who had developed writing before them.

Opting for the autocratic alternative depended not only on the presence of writing but also on other elements of civilization. An understanding of geometry helped with surveying fields for tax purposes; an understanding of the soil allowed state officials to classify land according to how fertile it was and to levy differential tax rates on this basis. The paradox of civilization's advance was that it made autocracy function more effectively.

The practice of intensive agriculture was another factor that helped facilitate the bureaucratic alternative by making the landscape more legible. The word "intensive" here refers to efforts to generate higher yields from the same amount of land through increased human effort and increased capital.[18] If we believe that bureaucrats will generally have less information than local people about production, any process that makes production more legible to outsiders—to use the term favored by James Scott—will make it easier for bureaucrats to operate.[19] Intensive agriculture often does this by reordering the landscape to make production more systematic and also often more compact. This was more feasible on some types of terrain than on others, but intensive agriculture did not depend only on the natural environment; it also depended on the advance of civilization in the form of new technologies for crop rotation, plowing, irrigation, and terracing. This brings us back to the paradox that the advance of civilization could further the cause of autocracy.

Ultimately, many autocrats who exercised the bureaucratic alternative were able to do so not because they created a state bureaucracy but because they inherited a bureaucracy from those who preceded them. Max Weber wrote that bureaucracy is "among those social structures which are the hardest to destroy."[20] In China and the Middle East we will see cases where a bureaucracy endured even in the face of massive dislocations. There may also be a corollary to Weber's claim: once a bureaucracy is destroyed it is hard to rebuild one from scratch. This is the problem that the Carolingians and other rulers faced in Europe in the wake of Rome's fall, and it shows why Europe took a different trajectory of political development.

Why Europe Was Different

The development of early democracy was hardly unique to Europe. The assemblies of classical Greece, the gatherings of the Germanic tribes, and the councils of medieval city-states all bear certain strong resemblances to collective governance as it occurred in other world regions. But Europe was different in several crucial ways. Unlike what happened in China and the Middle East, early democracy continued to survive and thrive in Europe rather than being fully supplanted by autocratic and bureaucratic rule. This is a first development we need to consider. Europeans were also different because they eventually succeeded in scaling up the practice of early democracy to societies covering large territories. Finally, early democracy in Europe then evolved, through a series of steps, into modern democracy. We need to ask how medieval Europeans developed a practice of political representation and how this eventually gave way to the selection of leaders by free elections with universal adult suffrage.

The irony of early democracy in Europe is that it thrived and prospered precisely because European rulers for a very long time were remarkably weak.[21] For more than a millennium after the fall of Rome, European rulers lacked the ability to assess what their people were producing and to levy substantial taxes based on this.[22] The most striking way to illustrate European weakness is to show how little revenue they collected. Europeans would eventually develop strong systems of revenue collection, but it took them an awfully long time to do so. In medieval times, and for part of the early modern era, Chinese emperors and Muslim caliphs were able to extract much more of economic production than any European ruler with the exception of small city-states.

To see Europe's early weakness, consider the evidence in Figure 1.1 that shows estimates of state revenue as a share of total economic production in four societies: China under the Song dynasty in 1086 CE, Iraq under the Abbasid Caliphate in 850 CE, and England and France circa 1300 CE.[23] Song emperors and Abbasid caliphs were able to extract upwards of ten times the revenue relative to GDP that could be extracted by European rulers. These figures are for central taxation; the question of European local

taxation, particularly for tithes that went to the church, will be discussed in chapter 5, and it does not change my overall conclusion.

One of the further lessons of Figure 1.1 is that if early democracy and autocracy were alternative routes of political development, they did not necessarily lead to the same outcome. Even after English monarchs had agreed to the Magna Carta, they were forced to settle with a vastly lower rate of taxation than were Chinese emperors or Muslim caliphs.

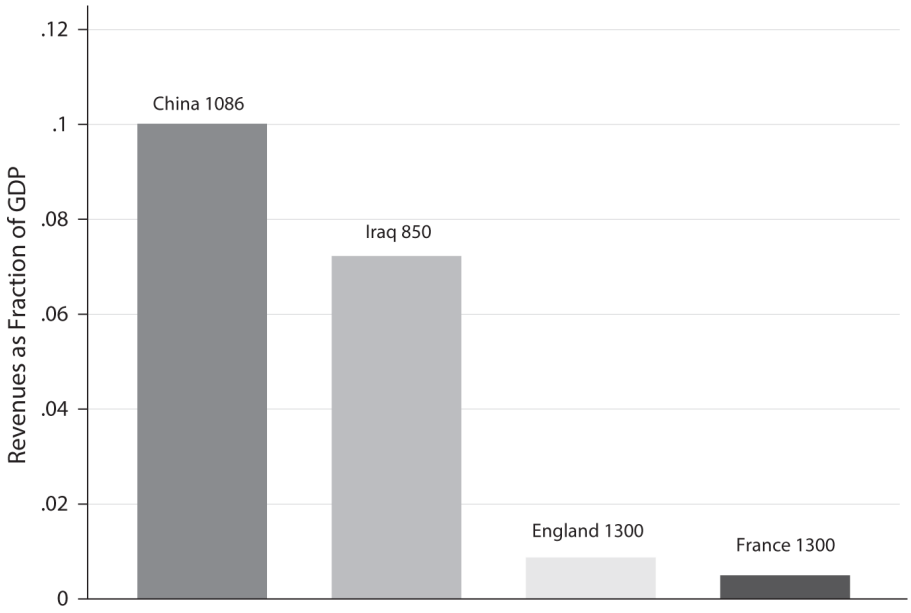


FIGURE 1.1. Fiscal extraction across three regions. (See the text for sources.)

For a very long time Europe's rulers were in a weak position because they lacked state bureaucracies. They did not dispose of many of the technologies for making a bureaucracy work, and the Romans did not bequeath this institution to them. The consequence was that those who wanted a bureaucracy had to start from scratch. Contributing to all this was the fact that the form of agriculture practiced in Europe—which was extensive rather than intensive—made it more difficult for bureaucracy to operate. European states would, eventually, develop strong state bureaucracies, in large part due to external threats, but by the time this happened democratic practices had become very firmly anchored, and they had also been scaled up to operate in large polities. With this sequence, bureaucracy did not substitute for democracy—as in the autocratic alternative—it instead became a complement.

To see the fundamental weakness of medieval European states, take the case of Philip the Fair of France, who reigned from 1285 to 1314. He is often credited with creating a centralized royal administration, but even after his extensive efforts, Philip still had a permanent central bureaucracy of only a few dozen individuals, and he lacked permanent military force. Absent this, Philip's biographer Joseph Strayer argued that Philip had to attain his objectives through means other than the threat of force because "he had little force on which to rely."[24] Philip's reign would resemble a litany of negotiations with various local groups—in dispersed order—to obtain consent for and assistance with raising revenues.[25]

The final irony of Europe's political development is that the slow progress of science and civilization favored the survival of early democracy. To take one example, consider the effect of understanding the soil. From an early date, rulers in China and in the Middle East developed an understanding of how different types of soil contributed to agricultural production. Armed with this knowledge, they were in a better position to know how much they could tax their subjects, rather than having to enter a process of negotiation and compromise. In China the legend known as the *Tribute of Yu*, or *Yu Gong*, recounts how Yu the Great, the first emperor of the Xia dynasty, surveyed each of his nine provinces and established different tax rates according to the quality of the soil. Though the story of Yu is apocryphal, the reality of early Chinese understanding of the soil is not, and there is no European equivalent to the story of Yu the Great.

The State Arrived First in China

The course of Chinese political development resembles the European one stood on its head. To understand the origins of Chinese political development, we need to go back to the second millennium BCE. China's first historical dynasty, the Shang, arose on the Loess Plateau of northwestern China, an area named for the type of soil that is found there. A prior dynasty, the Xia, which may or may not be mythical, would have been located in the same area.

The hallmark of Shang society was that from a very early date, governance took an autocratic form. Shang practice stipulated that kings be chosen according to a strict inheritance rule—there was no reference to a council or assembly having any choice in the matter, nor any subsequent influence. The Shang may have had a proto-bureaucracy, but we know with more certainty that Shang kings mobilized large military forces, numbering into the tens of thousands. The Shang also had a dominant central capital that was much larger than any of the settlements surrounding it.

The natural environment clearly nudged Chinese society in an autocratic direction. The early Chinese dynasties all emerged in the Loess Plateau. Loess is a type of soil that is soft, making it easy to work with even simple tools, and it is also very porous, ensuring that any water will be delivered to growing plants. Where there was also a source of water, loess soil provided an excellent basis for early agriculture. Loess soil is also present in Europe, and western Europe's first farmers, the Linearbandkeramik (LBK) culture, grew crops on loess soil. But in western Europe loess tended to be deposited in small scattered areas rather than across a giant plain, leading to a more dispersed pattern of early settlement. This may also have led to a longer-term trend toward dispersed political authority.

The precocious development of a state bureaucracy also pushed China in an autocratic direction. Commonly, Western observers will refer to the Qin (221–206 BCE) as the first dynasty to establish bureaucratic rule in China. In fact, the roots of Chinese bureaucracy extend much further back. Our first unambiguous evidence for bureaucratic rule comes from the Western Zhou dynasty, which lasted from 1047 to 772 BCE. The Zhou bureaucracy consisted of parallel administrative divisions involving a Grand Secretariat,

the Six and Eight Armies, a Ministry, and the Royal Household.[26] Many of the positions in this bureaucracy were hereditary, particularly in early periods, but over time meritocratic promotion became the norm.

The subsequent evolution of the Chinese state is one where bureaucratic recruitment and rule became ever more routinized, and this occurred at the expense of hereditary lineages. In western Europe, after the fall of Rome rulers pursued a policy of giving grants of land in exchange for military service. These grants tended to be one-way transactions. Over time this led to the creation of a category of members of society with substantial autonomy. The presence of this group would play a prominent role in the early development of medieval assemblies. In China things pushed in the opposite direction. With the perfection of an imperial examination system during the Tang and Song dynasties, Chinese rulers had at their disposal a means of bureaucratic recruitment that did not depend on societal networks outside of their control. Being a member of the elite now meant being part of the state itself.

Islamic Rulers Inherited a State

The Middle East took a different route to autocracy from China, one that shows how inheriting a state can be bad for democracy. Early democracy prevailed as the main form of governance in Arabia during the pre-Islamic period—rulers governed in a consensual manner through councils. One explanation for this was that in a nomadic society, people who were unhappy with a ruler's decisions could simply move elsewhere. The other important fact was that rulers lacked anything even faintly resembling a state: they had no bureaucracy and no permanent military force. This is a pattern that we will also see in other regions as diverse as the plains of North America and the forests of Central Africa.

One way of interpreting what happened next in Arabia is that the arrival of Islam fatally undermined democratic prospects, but this view does not fit the history very well. Hints of governance under Muhammad himself suggest that he operated in a consultative manner for the same reasons that other Arabian rulers had: this was the only way to make things work. The text commonly known as the *Constitution of Medina* provides one way to see this. There is also a tradition in Islam that the first four "righteous" caliphs were chosen collectively rather than purely through inheritance, and the Koran itself refers in two places to the need for rulers to govern through a process of *shura*, which in Arabic implies consultation.

It was the swift inheritance of a preexisting state—not Islam—that led to the demise of early democracy in the Middle East. As the Islamic conquerors spread outward from Arabia, they soon encountered more densely populated lands where people practiced an intensive and settled form of agriculture, a radically different environment from Arabia. In the territory that is now Iraq these lands were part of the Sasanian Empire, and in the century or so before the Islamic conquests the Sasanians had succeeded in creating a centralized bureaucracy to collect taxes from a fertile agricultural region that would come to be known as the Sawad —"The Black Land." Faced with this inheritance, after deposing the Sasanian leadership, the Arab conquerors co-opted their bureaucracy. The result, in spite of protests, was that caliphs could now govern in an

autocratic manner with little need for consultation. Succession to the caliphate became hereditary.

Swift geographical expansion was the other factor that undermined democracy in the Middle East. Early democracy in pre-Islamic Arabia, as in many other human societies, was a small-scale, face-to-face affair; elders from individual tribal groups would assemble, discuss, and reach some sort of a conclusion. The process was an informal one, precisely because the circumstances allowed for informality. With the Islamic conquests, the question was posed of how to govern not in a face-to-face setting but instead across distances of hundreds and even thousands of miles. Some scholars have suggested that in this situation what was needed was the practice eventually adopted by Europeans: a form of political representation that could allow for democratic governance over large distances.[27] But Europeans took centuries of trial and error to arrive at this solution; the inhabitants of the Islamic world would have needed to figure this out within a matter of decades.

The final thing to emphasize about the disappearance of democracy in the Middle East is that contingency played a large role here. Muslim conquerors were able to inherit a bureaucratic state because Sasanian rulers in Iraq had recently constructed one. Had the Islamic expansion happened one hundred years earlier—so in the sixth rather than the seventh century—there would have been no bureaucracy to inherit. The subsequent history of democracy in the Middle East might have been very different.

The Arrival of Modern Democracy

Modern democracy evolved from early democracy, and this process began in England before first reaching a fuller extent—for free white males—in the United States. Modern democracy is a form of rule where political participation is broad but episodic: citizens participate by voting for representatives, but this occurs only at certain intervals, and there are few means of control other than the vote—representatives cannot be bound by mandates or instructions.[28] All of this contrasts with early democracy. In early democracies participation was often restricted to a smaller number of individuals, but for those who enjoyed the right, the frequency of participation was much higher. It was also the case that those who chose representatives could bind them with mandates, and individual localities could either veto central decisions or opt out of them. This created substantial blocking power and therefore a need for consensus. For this reason, there was less of a problem of "tyranny of the majority," whereas this is an issue with which all modern democracies must grapple.

If modern democracy takes a particular form, the peculiarities of Anglo-American history provide much of the explanation. England, and then the United States, deviated from the common European pattern, and it will be important for us to understand how and why this happened. This will also help us to understand the potential fracture points of modern democracy.

Council and assembly governance existed throughout Europe during the medieval and early modern periods. In continental Europe assemblies functioned in a manner seen in early democracies elsewhere: deputies were often bound by strict mandates, and local constituencies had the latitude to refuse central decisions. This was not so different from the way the Huron of the Northeastern Woodlands governed themselves, and those continental European rulers who attempted to deviate from this pattern met with limited success.

As early as the fourteenth century, council governance in England started to look very different. While English monarchs governed jointly with Parliament, they also succeeded in imposing the requirement that deputies be sent without mandates from their constituencies and that majority decisions should be binding. The only constraint that constituencies could

impose on deputies was to not reelect them. This British pattern of deputies not having mandates would eventually become the norm for all modern democracies. No representative democracy since the late eighteenth century has allowed for explicit mandates—all that can be attempted are informal efforts like the Republican Party's "Contract with America" of 1994, and the absence of mandates has major consequences for the way democracy functions.[29]

The irony of England is that it was monarchical power that helped drive the shift away from early democracy, and so modern democracy incorporates an element of autocracy. It is for this reason that once Parliament became supreme after 1688, William Blackstone, the famous jurist, would write that it had "absolute despotic power."[30]

While England initiated the development of modern democracy, it was slow to advance the process further. Even after what is commonly known as the "Great Reform Act" of 1832, only a tiny fraction of the total population could vote.[31] Here we face a puzzle: while seventeenth-century English radicals like the Levellers first conceived of universal male suffrage as a way to govern a society, their ideas would first be implemented in North America and not in England. Though we often think of 1776 or 1787 as the beginning of American democracy, from the seventeenth century a very broad suffrage—for free white males—became the norm in England's North American colonies.

A broad manhood suffrage took hold in the British part of colonial North America not because of distinctive ideas but for the simple reason that in an environment where land was abundant and labor was scarce, ordinary people had good exit options. This was the same fundamental factor that had favored democracy in other societies. Granting political rights and shared rule was a necessary consequence because those at the top were in a weak position. The merchant companies and others who were charged with creating colonies initially tried to govern in a hierarchical manner, but this did not last long. Lacking coercive and administrative capacity, they soon found they needed to govern jointly with assemblies of colonists. The first of these took place at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619.

There is also a second, tragic side to the story of how labor scarcity influenced governance in North America, and this too began in 1619. The

same environmental conditions that pushed colonial governments to offer political rights to whites created incentives to establish a system of slavery for Africans. Whether you enjoyed political rights or were enslaved depended on the quality of what economists would call your "outside option." Apart from those who were taken involuntarily, and we will see that these cases existed, British migrants faced a choice of not coming to the New World in the first place. Africans arriving in the New World did not have this option. Once in the New World, British migrants unhappy with the conditions on offer could often manage to move elsewhere, but African slaves attempting to escape could hardly expect to meld into the general population, and we know that as early as the Elizabethan period, Africans were seen and portrayed negatively by the English.[32] Political rights for whites and slavery for Africans derived from the same underlying environmental condition of labor scarcity. It would take three hundred and fifty years after 1619 before African Americans would durably enjoy the same voting rights as others. That African Americans did finally secure the vote points to another feature of modern democracy: precisely because it is based on the idea of broad participation, those excluded have a particularly powerful argument for demanding the vote.

The U.S. Constitution of 1787 helped advance the transition to modern democracy. It did this in a surprising way by purging many elements of early democracy that had existed in state constitutions as late as the 1780s. After 1787 representatives could no longer be bound by mandates or instructions, whereas this had been common in colonial assemblies as well as in early state assemblies. Likewise, elections would occur less frequently, whereas even after 1776, in state legislatures elections most often occurred annually. Individual states would also be compelled to accept central decisions with regard to taxation and defense. Unlike in early democracy, the Constitution allowed for the creation of a powerful central state bureaucracy, and it offered a form of political participation that was broad but also only episodic and that involved governance across a very large territory. We are still in the process of learning whether this experiment can work.

Alternative Visions of Democracy

So far, I have laid out an account of the spread of early democracy and its transformation into modern democracy. There are also alternative views, and these involve the role of political ideas, inequality, and economic development.

Political Ideas

The most direct possible explanation for the emergence of democracy is that someone needed to invent the practice, and the Greeks got there first. Even if democracy in Greece eventually died out, the memory of it did not, and from the medieval era onward, western Europeans were able to draw on this Greek tradition, as well as a later Roman one. There are two big problems with this argument.

The first is that peoples like the Huron or the Tlaxcalans had never read Aristotle, yet they managed to come up with forms of government that struck Europeans as being strikingly democratic. The members of the Germanic assemblies described by Tacitus had not read Aristotle either.

The second problem is that even for Europe, the political ideas interpretation does not work that well. I will offer one example here before considering this at greater length in chapter 5. We know that Greek ideas about government were lost to western Europeans sometime after the fall of Rome until they first reappeared in Latin translation during the medieval era. The political theorist J. G. A. Pocock argued that the rediscovery of Greek ideas about the polis had a profound effect on the independent city republics of northern Italy, but this does not help us much with understanding how these city republics emerged in the first place. We know that Aristotle's *Politics* first appeared in Latin translation sometime around 1260 CE, but the vast majority of Italian communes became autonomous long before this date. It would seem that medieval townspeople had to reinvent democratic governance on their own, and it is striking that this happened first in Europe and not in the Islamic Middle East, because Aristotle's works were never lost in that region.

Ideas about democracy matter, and I will emphasize that throughout this book. But the simple notion that Europeans had democracy because of the

classical tradition fails to convince. Europeans advanced the cause of democracy even at moments when the classical tradition had been forgotten, and other peoples advanced the cause of democracy without ever having learned the classical tradition in the first place.

Inequality

The idea that inequality is prejudicial to democracy is deeply rooted—in a society divided into haves and have-nots, there will be jealousies that undermine peaceful democratic governance. Have-nots may also be more susceptible to the appeals of demagogues, so democracy should not survive for long in the face of high inequality.

It also stands to reason that there will be powerful forces that foster equality in a democracy. Since the poor outnumber the rich, they can vote for candidates proposing to do something about inequality. This could involve progressive taxation; it could also include progressive spending policies, such as government-subsidized education.

There is less support for the standard view of inequality and democracy than one might think. Exhibit A for this claim is western Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In many countries, modern democracy emerged and was maintained in spite of high and increasing inequality. Simultaneously, democracy alone often did little to change inequality, and over time elites realized this. If the authors of the Federalist Papers were obsessed with the danger that a republic could pose to property, by the late nineteenth century, western European elites learned to take a more blasé attitude—why worry about universal suffrage if it did not result in you being taxed heavily or expropriated? This conclusion has both good and bad implications: democracy may be more stable than we think in the face of high inequality, but if you are worried about inequality, then democracy alone does not provide the solution.

Economic Development

One of the most tenacious ideas about democracy is that it can only exist in rich countries. It's not hard to see where this idea might come from because the world's richest countries today are almost always democracies. The principal reason offered for this is that when there are fewer poor people,

there will be less of an audience for autocratic demagogues. Poor people may feel like they have less to lose from alternatives to democracy, and they may also be less well educated about the political process, or so the argument goes.[33]

The idea that economic development was a prerequisite for democracy was greatly strengthened by Seymour Martin Lipset, one of the most prominent political scientists of the twentieth century. Writing in 1959, Lipset investigated various indicators of development: per capita income, the number of persons per motor vehicle and per physician, and the number of radios, telephones, and newspapers. Lipset's data suggested that countries scoring poorly on these measures found it harder to maintain a stable democracy. Since the time he wrote, there has been much debate about this conclusion. Some believe development does indeed cause democracy.[34] Others say democracy and development are each caused by other underlying factors.[35]

The problem with the economic development hypothesis is that if we see the emergence of democracy in Europe as a very long process stretching back to the medieval era, and even before, then we need to remember that in these earlier centuries Europe was not more developed than the rest of the world—in fact, the reverse was often true. Even when they transitioned to modern democracy, many European countries were quite poor by our current standards. At the advent of the French Third Republic in 1870, France had the same level of per capita GDP that Tanzania does today.

We draw similarly nuanced conclusions when we flip the relationship and ask what effect democracy has on economic development. The standard argument is that democracy will be more favorable to growth because in a democracy people will feel that their property is more secure. I will take a deep dive into this issue in chapter 8. The evidence shows that when we compare early democracy and autocracy, we see that each of these systems had strengths and weaknesses when it came to economic development. Precisely because the early democratic regime was one of decentralized power, there was little risk of a central ruler trampling on property rights. However, decentralized power can also lead to barriers to entry for new market entrants, and for this reason, early democracy could present a brake on innovation. The Dutch Republic presents an example of this. When we

look at autocracies we see a reverse pattern: in China and the Middle East it helped to create a very wide market across which ideas and innovations could travel, but the Achilles' heel of autocracy was instability. With centralized power and a bureaucratic state, the risk was that rulers could suddenly shift policy in undesirable directions.

The optimistic view of modern democracy is that it has all the advantages for growth of early democracy without the downsides. Leaders will be usefully constrained, but there is a large national market with fewer barriers to entry. In chapter 9 I will draw a contrast between the United Kingdom and the Dutch Republic to show how this argument might be made. But if this comparison leaves us to be optimistic about modern democracy, the history of the United States could give us reason for pause. As the first true modern democracy, the United States has had an integrated national market, but even so, barriers to entry as a result of monopoly power have emerged time and again. One thinks here of the turn of the twentieth century as well as the turn of the twenty-first.[36]

Democracy's Future

Early democracy existed for thousands of years in a wide set of human societies: it was a very robust institution. One of my prime motivations for telling this story has been to try to cast modern democracy in a new light. In comparative terms modern democracy has existed for only a brief time. We should see it as an ongoing experiment and perhaps even be surprised that modern democracy has survived at all. Across the broad sweep of human history, societies either were governed autocratically by someone who disposed of a state bureaucracy or had something resembling early democracy where the state was absent, power was decentralized, and their overall size was likely to be small. The idea that one could sustain a democracy in a polity as large as the thirteen American colonies, combined with a central state, was unprecedented. We can use the lessons of history to draw three conclusions about the future of democracy.

New Democracies

The first conclusion concerns the many new democracies that have emerged since 1989. There is a great deal of justified fear about democratic retrenchment or "backsliding" around the globe today, and news accounts provide us with example after example of countries that are sliding into autocracy. Political scientists have even invented a whole new category for countries that no longer qualify as democracies but still have elections—they call these cases competitive authoritarianism.[37]

To better understand what is going on, we ought to take a step back. Instead of focusing on events over the last couple of years, consider today from the vantage point of 1988, the year before the Berlin Wall fell. If you were armed with the best political science research of the day and someone asked you what the chance was that a country like Ghana would be a vibrant democracy in thirty years' time, you would have said this was unlikely. Ghana was too poor and too ethnically divided to survive as a democracy.

So why did the predictions from 1988 prove so wrong? The unanticipated fall of the Berlin Wall would be one big reason, but the recent

wave of democratization cannot be attributed solely to the disappearance of superpower rivalry. The deeper lesson that history offers is that under certain conditions, and these are hardly rare, democratic governance is something that comes naturally to humans. Many of the societies that transitioned to democracy after 1989 had practiced forms of early democracy long before they encountered Europeans. The technology of modern democracy, with elections and parties, is something new, but the basic principle of *demokratia*—that the people ought to have power—is not.

There is a further potential lesson from recently democratizing countries: just as early democracy existed in lieu of a state, democratization since 1989 has been more likely to survive when the initial power of the central state is weak. African countries with weaker state structures circa 1989 are more likely to be democracies today, while in the Middle East the persistence of state coercive structures over centuries has weighed against democracy.[38]

One final thing we need to note about the spread of modern democracy is that in many cases, institutions of electoral accountability have been layered over preexisting institutions of early democracy. There is reason to believe, as the political scientist Kate Baldwin has shown, that even in this new context, institutions of early democracy can continue to provide important forms of accountability.[39]

Persistence of Autocracy

The second prediction some people made about democracy in 1989 involves China, and it too proved to be equally wrong. Some asked whether market-driven economic development would necessarily lead to political liberalization and to China starting to look more like the West. It was thought that as society grew richer, people would be in a stronger position to demand democracy. It was also thought that growth could only be maintained with political liberalization. Neither of these predictions has proven true, or at least not so far.

The lessons of history help us understand why autocracy has persisted in China. For a long period during the last two millennia, China was richer than Europe even though the form of governance in China was autocratic and bureaucratic whereas European rulers had to govern through

assemblies. The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages in western Europe is often credited with furthering the advance of early democracy, but we will see that China also had a medieval commercial revolution of its own. This was associated with higher levels of income per capita than in western Europe, but this did nothing to shift China away from autocracy, so why should we expect Chinese growth in more recent times to produce a different outcome?

The other key fact to understanding China involves the question of sequencing. Autocracy is a very robust form of political development if the state gets there first. I am not saying here that prior experience with a state bureaucracy makes a subsequent shift to modern democracy impossible, nor am I saying that the absence of state development makes developing modern democracy a sure thing; it is simply a lot more likely.[40] In Europe the pattern was very different as forms of early democratic governance existed for centuries before bureaucracies were built.[41] In the end, rather than seeing China as a deviation from a standard route for political development set by Europeans, it is instead simply an alternative route for governance and a very stable one.

The Future of American Democracy

The lessons of history can finally tell us something about the future of democracy in the United States. According to one view, the United States has been a vibrant democracy thanks to the Constitution provided to us by the Founders, but we have suddenly lost our way. What we thought were inviolable norms of decorum and decency have suddenly been violated. At the same time, trust in many of our institutions is at or near an all-time low. The trajectory of other failed democracies suggests that this is the point at which transitions to autocracy happen. A deeper look at the history of democracy tells us that we may still have reasons for optimism but only if we understand what has allowed American democracy to survive: continued investments to keep citizens connected with a distant state.

The Constitution of 1787 established democratic rule across a large territory, much larger than was common for early democracies, and this was paired with a form of participation that was broad but also episodic. But the Constitution did not magically solve the problem of scale. Within three

short years of the Constitution's adoption, in an essay titled "Public Opinion," James Madison himself would emphasize that in any republic covering a vast territory, concrete investments needed to be made to ensure that the public can inform itself about government. He therefore supported efforts by Congress to subsidize the distribution of newspapers. Some have credited this with helping to stabilize the Early Republic. Others advocated state support of schooling in the Early Republic for exactly the same reason, and this gave birth to the Common School movement.

The broader lesson of Madison's essay on public opinion is that in a large democracy, the idea that the public can accurately inform itself so that it trusts government cannot be taken for granted. We see this today from the fact that larger democracies tend to have lower levels of trust in government than do smaller democracies. We see it also from the fact that in the United States and elsewhere, citizens tend to trust local and state governments more than they trust central governments, and the same holds true for the local, as opposed to national, media. At the same time, we also see that while scale makes it harder to maintain trust, large scale is not fate. What it does mean is that in a large modern democracy we need to pay extra attention to the problem, and we need to address it through continual investments in citizen engagement.

Beyond its large territory, the United States also differs from the early democracies because of its strong central state. In early democracies there was little question of having an authoritarian reversion because this could have only been accomplished with coercive state power, and no such power existed. When rulers like Philip the Fair of France tried to go the authoritarian route in the absence of a state, they found themselves condemned to continued bargaining and negotiations. But what about the United States today?

One possible response is to say that we are in deep danger of sliding into autocracy because we have a powerful state. History points to a more measured response. It suggests that what matters above all here is how political development is sequenced. Once autocrats have constructed a powerful state bureaucracy, it is hard to then transition to democracy, but if rule by council or assembly comes first, particularly if it involves formalized arrangements extending over a large territory, then democracy has a better chance of emerging and surviving the development of a

bureaucracy.[42] Through the practice of early democracy, members of society gain a habit of acting collectively and there is an opportunity for rulers and people to resist autocracy and instead jointly build a state. In England a long tradition of collective action helped Parliament resist attempts by Henry VIII to rule by proclamation with a newly created bureaucracy. We will see in chapter 7 how this same process failed in the Middle East because forms of early democracy adapted only to face-to-face settings were of little use in resisting autocratic encroachment in a polity on the scale of the caliphate.

Ultimately, while our long tradition of collective governance may help protect the United States from autocracy, we should also distinguish between the survival of democracy in general and the survival of a democracy with which we are satisfied. If citizens feel increasingly disconnected and distrustful, and there is a perception that democratic politics is dominated by a few, the survival of our form of government may seem like less of a victory than we originally thought.

2

Early Democracy Was Widespread

WHEN WE REFER TO DEMOCRACY TODAY we think of a political system where all adults can vote at regular intervals in free and fair elections in which multiple candidates compete. This is for the most part a development of the twentieth century. But if we think back to the original definition of *demokratia*, that the people should govern themselves—or hold power—we can imagine democracy taking other forms. Early democracy had several common features.

The most crucial element of early democracy was that those who ruled needed to obtain consent for their decisions from a council or assembly. Even in the most autocratic systems, no one ever truly rules alone—they need to rule through subordinates whom they might ask for advice before making decisions. But this is fundamentally different from needing to obtain consent from a council or assembly of individuals who are independent from you and who may well be your equals. This was early democracy.

A second element present in many, though not all, early democracies was that rulers did not simply inherit their position: there was some way in which rising to leadership required the consent of others. There could be a hereditary element that gave you an advantage, such as belonging to a specific lineage, but you still needed to be chosen and acknowledged as leader. When we consider the importance of heredity, we need to also remember the role it plays in our societies today. Writing of what he saw as the democratic system of the Native Americans of the Great Plains, Robert Lowie observed that "as the son of a Rockefeller or Morgan has a better chance to become a great businessman than has a guttersnipe, so a Cree chief's son was more readily acclaimed as a brave man than an orphan would be."[1]

So far, we have not said anything about the extent of political participation in early democracy. In Athens by the end of the fifth century BCE participation was very broad, involving all free adult males; it was also frequent and active. This is an exceptional case. But even if few other early societies had participation this broad, there are many other instances where participation was still extensive. As we say this, we need to also remember that in Athens, women played no role in politics and the free population of Athens held slaves.

The goal of this chapter is primarily to describe rather than to explain. Beginning with the democratic history of Athens, I will then detail features of five early democracies, followed by five early autocracies. At the chapter's end, I will consider evidence from a broader set of societies: the 186 societies of the Standard Cross Cultural Sample. The job of explaining why some early states were democratic and others were not will be left for chapters 3 and 4. Still, I will at times mention features that do point toward an explanation. Early democracy was more likely to flourish in small-scale settings, in instances where rulers lacked the coercive potential provided by a state bureaucracy, and when rulers found it difficult to monitor economic production and population movements.

The Athenian Precedent

Scholars commonly say that Athens had a democratic system of government from 508 BCE thanks to a set of reforms introduced by an aristocrat named Cleisthenes.[2] The word *demokratia* did not appear until somewhat after this date, as Cleisthenes himself referred to *isonomia*—equal laws for all.[3] Democracy persisted in Athens, albeit with interruptions, until Macedon conquered the city in 322 BCE.

Though the reforms of Cleisthenes happened at one moment in time, Athenian democracy was the product of a long evolution, with many of the same background conditions that we will see outside of Greece. It is also true that there were many ancient Greek democracies other than Athens. Here I will focus on Athens alone among the Greek cases for the practical reason that its history is the best documented.[4]

The first background condition to Athenian democracy was the collapse of a prior centralized and autocratic political order. In Bronze Age Greece, kings in large palaces ruled states through bureaucracies together with a military elite, and these kingdoms were more sophisticated than anything that had existed in Greece prior to that date.[5] Sometime around 1200 BCE this civilization collapsed. As part of a general disappearance of Bronze Age civilization in the eastern Mediterranean, the shock in Greece was a particularly hard one. States collapsed, as did the economy; even writing disappeared.[6] The literate inhabitants of Bronze Age Greece used a writing system that is known to us today as Linear B. This was a language whose use was restricted to a few professionals, probably almost exclusively in the bureaucracy.[7]

In the new Greek states that emerged after the Bronze Age collapse, rulers lacked bureaucracies, and they instead found themselves obliged to rule through consultation. We can see possible evidence for this in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[8] Written to describe events of the Bronze Age, some argue that these two texts bear traces of the society in which they were composed as it existed around 700 BCE. They describe how the Greeks thought the Cyclopes were uncivilized because they held no meetings or councils or *agorai*. In another instance elders in a meeting propose judgments and ordinary people express their opinions.[9]

Athens became a polis occupying the entire Attic peninsula (an area of about 2,500 square kilometers). This was large compared to most other city-states in Greece, which averaged less than 100 square kilometers, but the territory controlled by Athens was still small compared to states outside of Greece.[10] Compact geography favored the development of early democracy in Greece in the same way that it would later do so elsewhere: before the advent of modern transport, the simple fact of getting to an assembly could be a burdensome task.[11]

Within the early Athenian polis aristocrats who held their positions by birth were the ones to exercise control. There was an executive, elected from among the aristocracy, of nine archons who served one-year terms, as well as a council, known as the *areopagus*, composed of those who had previously served as archons.[12]

By the year 594 BCE Athens faced a severe economic crisis combined with class antagonism. According to tradition, the Athenian elite appointed Solon to propose reforms. Solon abolished the system of debt bondage and created a new council, the *boule*—the council of four hundred—that would rival the *areopagus*. The *boule* prepared the agenda for a larger assembly of citizens known as the *ekklesia*. After Solon's reforms all adult male citizens could participate in the *ekklesia*, but membership in the *boule* was still only open to the wealthy.

The subsequent reforms of Cleisthenes represented not just a political change but also a deep reorganization of Athenian society itself. Cleisthenes reorganized Athens into 139 *demes*—units of 150 to 250 individuals.[13] In addition to belonging to a *deme*, citizens were associated with one of ten new artificially created "tribes" that now each sent 50 individuals, selected by lot, to a Council of 500 that would administer the day-to-day affairs of the city. By intent the *demes* comprising a given tribe did not come from the same geographic region in Attica. This created what political scientists would call a "cross-cutting cleavage."

The Athenian structure of tribes bears an uncanny resemblance to the clan structure of the Huron and the Iroquois—one could be a member of the same clan as someone else without living in the same locality. This cross-cutting pattern seems a good strategy to better bind a society together.

One way in which Athens fits with some early democracies, but not others, is that women were completely absent from formal politics, even at the level of the *deme*.[14] I will return to the question of political participation by women at several further points in the chapter.

The final critical evolution of Athenian democracy took place several decades after the reforms of Cleisthenes. In 462 BCE a new set of reforms gave the Athenian lower classes greater influence within the *ekklesia*.[15] Prior to this date, the *thetes*, as they were known, could participate passively in the assembly, but they could not hold office.[16] Now their participation became much more direct as they could both speak and hold office.

The reforms of 462 BCE happened at a time when the elite of Athens needed their people. The logic behind giving the *thetes* a greater political voice was laid out by an Athenian observer who has become known to posterity as the "Old Oligarch." He was no champion of democracy but saw it as necessary for the following reason.

> It is right that the poor and the ordinary people there [in Athens] should have more power than the noble and rich, because it is the ordinary people who man the fleet and bring the city her power; they provide the helmsmen, the boatswains, the junior officers, the look-outs and the shipwrights; it is [all] these people who make the city powerful much more than the hoplites and the noble and respectable citizens. This being so, it seems just that all should share in public office by lot and by election, and that any citizen who wishes should be able to speak in the assembly.[17]

Prior to its military conflicts with Persia, Athens had mostly been in conflicts that involved small numbers of heavy infantry known as *hoplites*. From the beginnings of conflict with Persia, naval power involving rowed *triremes* became much more important. The Athenian navy required very substantial manpower—15,000 people according to one estimate.[18] Though many rowers were slaves, many others came from the free population of Attica.

Athens may have been unique, but the conditions that led to Athenian democracy were not—we will see them time and again. The first of these was small scale. Athens may have been large relative to other Greek city-states, but it was small compared to other neighbors in the region. In addition, from the Persian wars onward, the elite of Athens needed the broader population for military service, and this led to the quid pro quo of service in exchange for political rights.[19] Finally, Athenian democracy emerged after the collapse of a prior autocratic and bureaucratic order.

Early Democracies outside the Greek World

It is common to suggest that in early hunter gatherer societies some form of "primitive democracy" was the natural political system. It is equally common to suggest that this practice disappeared with the invention of agriculture—Robert Dahl said this in his 1998 book *On Democracy*, a canonical text among political scientists.[20] In fact, Dahl was overly hasty in declaring early democracy's decline; many human societies maintained early democracy long after the transition away from small bands of hunter gatherers. In what follows I will first briefly consider five examples of early democracy before moving on to the examples of early autocracy, and then I will present evidence from a broader sample of societies.

The Mesopotamian Kingdom of Mari

One of the oldest examples of early democracy comes from ancient Mesopotamia during the third and second millennia BCE. In 1943, a Danish Assyriologist named Thorkild Jacobsen asserted that governance by assemblies was common in Mesopotamia before centralizing rulers destroyed this pattern. Jacobsen had no direct evidence to back up this claim, so he referred to the Epic of Gilgamesh in which a discussion takes place between King Gilgamesh and a council of elders. It is said that Gilgamesh sought popular support in a conflict with King Agga of Kish. To obtain this support he made a case to the elders of the city of Uruk, who then considered this question in their assembly. They agreed to provide their support, and of Gilgamesh we are told that he rejoiced and "his liver was made bright."[21]

Even if there wasn't a popular referendum on resistance against Kish, the situation described here is considerably more democratic than if Gilgamesh had tried to rule by fear and force. The big problem is that we do not know whether things actually happened this way. Gilgamesh himself may have not even existed.

Since the time Jacobsen wrote, new evidence has emerged to support his story.[22] Mari was an ancient kingdom that started off as a city, just inside what is today the border of Syria with Iraq, and it was for a time a

possession of the Akkadian empire, only to become independent once again after that empire fell. Mari endured as an independent kingdom until Hammurabi of Babylon invaded and destroyed it in 1761 BCE—just a few years before pronouncing the law code for which he is famous.

Though the rulers of Mari were kings, these kings had to negotiate with individual localities in order to raise revenue, and town councils were collectively responsible for these taxes. These councils were probably elite affairs, but in some instances, it is clear that there was broader participation.[23] A first way this happened was when the whole population of a town gathered to hear a royal proclamation. Simply being called to listen is not what early democracy was all about, but a second example comes much closer to that. In some cases, a large number of people from a town were called together to say how much they could contribute to central government finances—a pattern of royal political authority was meshed with local traditions of collective governance.[24]

Further evidence for early democracy in Mari comes from the regimes that succeeded it. There was a general pattern in Mesopotamia that when central state bureaucratic power ebbed, rulers turned increasingly to local councils to help raise revenue. From 423 to 404 BCE, under the Persian king Darius II, in urban areas there was something called simply "the assembly" and in rural areas an "assembly of elders."[25] We will see the ebb and flow between autocracy and early democracy again in chapter 7 with the Islamic conquest of Mesopotamia. The Muslims conquered Iraq in the immediate wake of a series of centralizing reforms that the Sasanian monarchs had enacted, and this had major consequences because the invaders inherited a state bureaucracy.

Mari's geographic location and natural environment also favored early democracy, following what one could call the "Swiss" pattern where democracy survives in out-of-the-way places. We will see this later in the chapter with the ancient republics in the foothills of the Himalayas and in upland areas of Mexico. In the case of Mari, it was not only distance from the densely populated areas of southern Mesopotamia that mattered. Mari was located in an area that was inhospitable for agriculture. With poor soil, little rainfall, and very limited possibility for irrigation, some have

suggested that it is not clear why the city of Mari was ever founded in the first place.[26]

Republics in Ancient India

In 326 BCE Alexander the Great attempted to conquer India, and as he progressed, members of his retinue recorded accounts of the different societies they encountered and how these peoples governed themselves. On numerous occasions they found institutions that resembled the republican city-states that had existed in Greece. But the idea of ancient Indian republics did not last very long in the minds of Europeans. Later scholars dismissed these accounts as a case of outsiders projecting images of institutions from back home onto foreign societies. Despotism—so they thought—must have been the norm.[27]

There was little further discussion of ancient Indian republics until the twentieth century, and this time the debate became colored by the colonial context. If Indians had only ever governed themselves through tyranny, this might somehow legitimize British rule; if there was instead a history of Indian republics, then this could justify independence.[28]

In 1902 an English scholar named Thomas Rhys Davids noticed that some of the earliest Buddhist texts presented a picture of a society where monarchies and republics existed side by side. The period portrayed would have been in the sixth and seventh centuries BCE, so two to three centuries prior to what was seen by Alexander's retinue. Rhys Davids was in the same position as Thorkild Jacobsen in his description of Mesopotamia—a potentially mythical text provided tantalizing evidence of early democracy—but there was no proof.

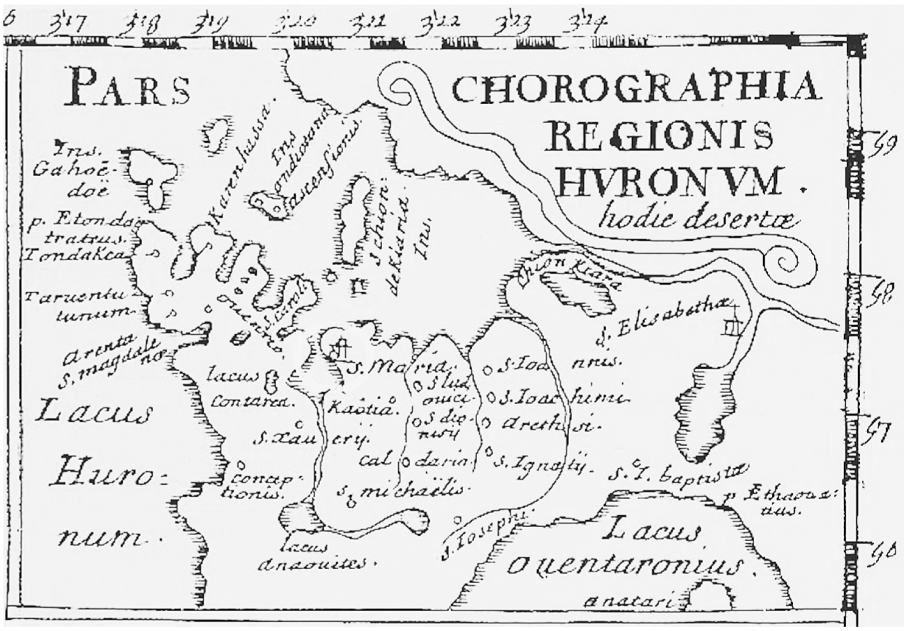
Rhys Davids highlighted the example of the Shakya—the clan of the buddha. The business of the clan took place in an assembly where both young and old were present, and it must have included taxation.[29] The clan elected a single chief—known as the *raja*—to run the assembly sessions and to preside over the business of state. Rhys Davids thought that the *raja* must have had a position like a Roman consul—a presiding officer but not truly a superior.[30] The same texts also describe village governance involving an assembly of all householders.[31] This certainly sounded a lot like early democracy.

Since Rhys Davids first wrote, additional texts have come to light that support his early assertions, and in 1968, J. P. Sharma concluded that the idea of republics in ancient India was well-founded.[32] The ancient Indian republics existed most notably in the foothills of the Himalayas in the eastern end of what is today Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Once again, early democracy survived in out-of-the-way places.

We should also ask whether women in ancient India had rights of political participation. One hypothesized assembly, the *vidátha*, may have been a village gathering that included both men and women. Some have referred to this as the "earliest folk assembly" of the Indo-Aryan peoples.[33] The problem is that this claim is based purely on scriptural evidence from the *rig veda*, and one scholar remarked there were more interpretations of the *vidátha* than there were scholars who had worked on the problem.[34] Romila Thapar, a prominent historian of early India, proposed that rather than being an assembly, the *vidátha* was a ritual occasion for the distribution of gifts, so it did not allow any meaningful participation by women in politics.[35]

The Huron of the Northeastern Woodlands

Consider now a case of early democracy in a very different world region and for which we have much better ethnographic evidence. In the year 1609 during a voyage down the Saint Lawrence River, the French explorer Samuel Champlain encountered a native people who would come to be known by the French as the Huron, which was a term that in the French language of the time was used for ruffians. The Huron called themselves the Wendats. In the following years French Jesuit missionaries would travel into Huron territory to try to convert the population to Christianity. As a by-product of this, they left an extensive record describing Huron society, including how its people governed themselves.[36] Thanks to this record, we know more about Huron society at the point of European contact than we do about the Iroquois, their more famous neighbors to the south. For the Iroquois—who called themselves the Haudenosaunee, or "people of the longhouse"—the best ethnographic accounts date from a later epoch after the introduction of European diseases and firearms.


PARS
CHOROGRAPHIA
REGIONIS
HVRONVM.
hodie desertæ
Lacus
Huro-
num.
Lacus
Ouentaronius.
S. Elisabetha
S. Maria
S. Ioannis
S. Ioannis
S. Ignatij
S. Ioseph
S. Ioannis
S. Xauerij
S. Michaëlis
lacus
contarea.
Kaotia.
conceptionis.
lacus
Anaouites.
anatari
Ins.
Gahoë-
doë
Ins.
Ins.
Ins.

members decided which member of the lineage would be awarded the position, and in the matrilineal and matrilocal society of the Huron, it was women who had the final say. It was understood that chiefs could be deposed by a clan at any time if their performance was deemed inadequate. By all accounts, French Jesuit visitors were surprised by the absence of hierarchical governance found in Huron society when compared with their home country of France. Unlike the Dauphin in France, Huron chiefs only acceded to their positions if their community thought them of sufficient quality.[39]

Each Huron village was governed by a council where the chiefs and a group whom Jesuits called the "Old Men" played the most prominent role, but they also observed that "everyone who wishes may be present, and has the right to express his opinion."[40] The village council was responsible for organizing the provision of public goods, such as the maintenance of the protective palisade for the inhabitants. It also organized redistribution of food in time of need and adjudicated legal disputes between members of different clans.

Above the level of the village, each Huron tribe also had a council composed of a tribal chief and the clan chiefs. The tribal chief, though nominally in charge, had little coercive power and no real subordinates to use for this purpose, and individual clan chiefs retained a high degree of independence.

The final level of Huron governance was the confederacy council. Here too central authority was weak, and consensual decision making was the rule. Each tribe had the right to abide or not abide by a confederacy decision, a principle of unanimity that we will see in European early democracies, such as the Dutch Republic. Underlying this was the fact that those at the center had no independent means of coercion at their disposal. The fact that the Huron were settled in a relatively compact area may explain how they were able to maintain a system of early democracy not only at the village and tribal levels but also at the level of the entire confederacy. Several days of travel would have sufficed to attend council meetings.

Many have argued that women played a prominent role in Huron politics, and their Iroquois neighbors to the south are thought to have been

the same. In both Huron and Iroquois society, a clan mother appointed a new chief, who was then confirmed by the men of the council.[41] Bruce Trigger, the most prominent scholar of the Huron, argued that this power of appointment was not only ceremonial: women could and did both elect and dismiss chiefs. Jesuit observers referred to women rejecting a new chief because they "expected to see only broken heads" under him.[42] In Trigger's opinion it was the matrilocal character of Huron society that made this possible: living from birth to death in the same extended family, women were in a stronger position when men married into their wives' families.[43] We also have clear evidence of political participation by women among the Iroquois. In his classic ethnographic account, Lewis Henry Morgan pointed to the same ability of Iroquois women to seat and unseat chiefs, and further records refer to women holding council together to advise chiefs.[44]

So, where did matrilocality come from if it was so consequential for female participation in politics? In 1884 Friedrich Engels speculated that all societies started off matrilineal and matrilocal and gradually evolved in a patrilineal direction where women were subordinated. We know how Engels came to this argument because he had encountered Lewis Henry Morgan's work after discovering Karl Marx's ethnographic notes following his death.[45] The matrilocal origin hypothesis of Engels parallels what others have suggested for deities in early societies: at first they were all female and gradually were replaced by males.[46]

Some modern anthropologists argue that matrilocality emerges when women play an important role in food production, and with the Iroquois and the Huron this occurred through maize agriculture.[47] There is also another hypothesis: matrilocality is a strategy for a dominant group that is expanding into territory with subordinate groups. In this case, matrilocality would have first become a practice a thousand years ago when the Huron and the Iroquois entered the area.[48]

In contrast with chief selection, formal council participation in both Huron and Iroquois society remained an exclusively male affair. This was true of councils at the confederation, tribal, and even the village level. French Jesuits said that Huron women had the responsibility for making the fire around which a council was held, but once this was done they went outdoors and had their places taken by men.[49] Elisabeth Tooker, a

prominent specialist of Iroquoian groups, observed that even as late as 1961 women did not speak in council meetings.[50] However, in earlier times it is said that the views of older women were conveyed to a council meeting by male attendees.[51]

The Mesoamerican Republic of Tlaxcala

The autocratic Aztec Triple Alliance is the best-known polity in sixteenth-century Mesoamerica, but it was not the only one; next door to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan lay a society that organized itself on early democratic principles. Europeans discovered Tlaxcala when Hernán Cortés entered its territory in 1519, and he described it in the following terms:

> The province is ninety leagues in circumference, and, as far as I have been able to judge about the form of government, it is almost like that of Venice, or Genoa, or Pisa, because there is no one supreme ruler. There are many lords all living in this city, and the people who are tillers of the soil are their vassals, though each one has his lands to himself, some more than others. In undertaking wars, they all gather together, and thus assembled they decide and plan them.[52]

The society that Cortés saw was one where individuals had different political status, but it was also quite far from being an autocracy. Some decades later, while writing a report commissioned by the Spanish Crown, Diego Camargo would coin the term the "Republic of Tlaxcala."

Scholars have learned about the political system of Tlaxcala by using both narratives from the time of Spanish conquest and archaeological evidence.[53] Both sources suggest that Cortés was broadly right—a council of 50 to 100 titled nobles governed the republic, and there were four principal leaders within the council.[54] Being of noble standing was not strictly hereditary because individuals of any social status could be ennobled if they provided exceptional service, particularly in warfare. The Tlaxcalans did have a bureaucracy, but there also remained a degree of decentralization in their fiscal arrangements. Each council member was responsible for an administrative district called a *teccalli*.

One further feature of the Tlaxcalan Republic distinguished it from the other examples of early democracy considered here. In many cases early democracy emerged when multiple local communities banded together to form a single entity, but precisely because the process of centralization remained incomplete, local authorities retained a substantial voice in decision making. Tlaxcala was different: traditional structures were completely redesigned, yet early democracy remained.[55] This recalls the way that Cleisthenes reshaped Athenian society.

The style of agriculture that its inhabitants practiced may provide one reason for early democracy's survival in Tlaxcala. The Aztecs in the valley of Mexico practiced an intensive form of agriculture, aided by irrigation, where it was relatively easy for rulers to track what people could produce. Descriptions of Tlaxcalan agriculture suggest that it was more primitive.[56] The ruggedness and variability of rainfall within the province of Tlaxcala may have made it harder for rulers to know how much people were producing.

Republicanism in Central Africa

Early democracy also existed in many precolonial African societies, but Europeans often took a long time to recognize this. In 1940 two anthropologists named Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard portrayed precolonial African political systems as taking one of two forms: stateless societies or centralized states.[57] In the first category there was little authority above the village level. The second category was autocracy—a paramount ruler who faced no checks on his actions ruled through a bureaucracy.

Prior to Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Frederick Lugard, a British colonial administrator, had painted an even starker picture of African autocracies.

> They appear to have become despotisms marked by a ruthless disregard for human life. Holocausts of victims were sacrificed to appease the deity, or at the whim of the despot. Such were the kingdoms of Uganda and Unyoro in the east, and of Dahmoey, Ashanti, and Benin in the west.[58]

Fortes, Evans-Pritchard, and Lugard all ignored that early democracy might have existed in precolonial Africa. We can use the pioneering work of Jan Vansina, who drew lessons from oral tradition, to reach a different conclusion about the peoples of the region.[59] Throughout Central Africa—a region centered on what is today the Democratic Republic of the Congo—individual local communities tended to be headed by a single (male) individual who, in some cases, ruled with the aid of a village council. Leaders typically acquired their positions through the accumulation of wealth, not through inheriting them. Anthropologists refer to these as "big man" societies.[60]

Once they began to form larger entities above the village level, Central African polities took two different forms. Some evolved in an autocratic direction where one individual ruled through subordinates he himself chose. In others, local leaders successfully resisted centralization—these were the early democracies.

The Tshiluba speakers of Kasai—a region in the southern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo today—established a system of governance called a *lwaba*. Under this system of republican government one "big man" was elected by his peers as chief for a two- or three-year term. In exchange for this he was expected to pay his peers a substantial sum.[61]

The Lwimbi people, located in present-day Angola, also resisted centralization by their chiefs. Leaders above the village level were appointed by a council for an initial period of two years that could be extended but for no longer than eight years.[62]

As early as the fifteenth century, the Songye people, also of Kasai, established an "aristocratic republic" based on the *eata* system. The population was divided into two classes. Those in the upper class elected a president for a period of three to five years. As was the case with the Tshiluba, the elected leader paid valuable gifts to his peers. The president, who could not be reelected, then went to live near a sacred grove of trees known as an *eata*. Since a number of these *eata* groves survive, it is possible to date the institution as first emerging in the fifteenth or sixteenth century.[63]

The irony behind the preceding three stories is that part of the ethnographic evidence supporting them derives from a colonial official who lamented the fact that the Belgian state had imposed a system of hereditary chiefs throughout the Congo. Writing in 1933, Auguste Verbeken argued that this ignorance of local institutions helped explain why African populations were hostile to outside control; adapting policies to local realities would make more sense. This pattern of European colonizers making chief positions hereditary was, in fact, not limited to this part of the Congo or this particular colonizer.[64]

Some societies in Central Africa developed a system where central authority was hereditary, belonging to a single clan or lineage, but even in these instances early democracy survived. In the Kuba kingdom, central leaders enjoyed many regal trappings, including burial ceremonies that lasted a full year. They nonetheless were obliged to have their proposals considered by a council of nobles who could weigh in; they did so by moving their belts up and down.[65] While the central council of the Kuba kingdom was an elite one, within each village participation was broader, involving a headman, or *kubol*, a spokesman, and a council.[66]

We have seen five examples of early democracy in regions as diverse as Mesopotamia, ancient India, the Northeastern Woodlands of America, Mesoamerica, and Central Africa. Given this great variety, it is hard to sustain the argument that the practice of democracy was invented in one place at one time; it is instead something that comes naturally to humans. But just because early democracy came naturally did not mean that it was inevitable, and in the section to follow we will see that autocracy too was present in many regions.

Examples of Early Autocracy

In its literal sense, meaning rule by one, autocracy is a misnomer because apart from in the smallest-scale human groups, no leader truly rules on his or her own. What distinguished early autocracy from early democracy was that rulers did not have to share power with a council or assembly. In early autocracies those who ruled did so by instead using subordinates whom they themselves controlled.

The Third Dynasty of Ur

I began the discussion of early democracy with the kingdom of Mari in northern Mesopotamia. Here I will consider a kingdom in southern Mesopotamia that was organized in a very different way. If for Mari we saw hints that the natural environment made it more difficult for autocrats to impose bureaucratic rule, the more favorable environment in southern Mesopotamia did just the opposite.

Like other kingdoms in the region, the rulers of Ur's Third Dynasty (2112–2004 BCE) began with a city and then constructed a larger kingdom. As they did so, they also developed what one scholar has called the most centralized state to have existed in the area.[67] Ur's rulers controlled a territory divided into separate provinces that had a dual system of administration: each province had a governor who answered to the monarch and who came from a dominant local family. On its own this might have implied a high degree of local autonomy, but in Ur each province also had a general who was an outsider loyal only to the monarch.[68]

The bulk of the institutional reforms during Ur's Third Dynasty were carried out by a ruler named Shulgi. He reigned for forty-eight years, and his list of reforms gives us a prototype of what you might want to do to successfully transform your society into an early autocracy.[69]

1. Create a standing army
2. Create a unified administrative system
3. Introduce a tax system for redistribution
4. Create scribal schools for bureaucrats
5. Reform the writing system

6. Introduce new accounting procedures
7. Reorganize weights and measures
8. Introduce a new calendar
9. Make yourself a deity

The irony of these reforms is that while they imply top-down control, in many ways they also involved the advance of civilization. Reforms to a writing system, new accounting methods, common training for bureaucrats, and a reorganized system of weights and measures all sound like good things. But by making society more legible, these innovations may have also facilitated autocratic control.

The Aztec Triple Alliance

Consider next the case of the Aztecs where autocracy supplanted early democracy. The Aztec Triple Alliance involved a league where three cities, Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan, dominated what had previously been a series of independent city-states.[70]

Each individual city-state in the Aztec Empire was referred to as an *altepetl*. In their initial form these cities were governed by a king known as a *tlatoani*, who was selected by a council of nobles consisting of kin of the deceased ruler. The *tlatoani* occupied a large palace and enjoyed an exalted position, but there were also elements of early democracy. A council of nobles assisted the *tlatoani*, and some suggest that governance within the city involved a process of negotiation between the king, the nobility, and groups of commoners. It is possible that this tradition of council governance was inherited from earlier societies in the area, but no historical record can yet confirm this intriguing idea.[71]

The principal municipal tax the Aztecs levied was a land tax assessed by household, and commoners were also subject to labor taxes. Aztec communities practiced an intensive form of agriculture with substantial irrigation. Agricultural improvements such as this helped support a high level of population density that is estimated to have reached 100 to 150 persons per square kilometer by the time of the Spanish conquest.[72] In this environment exit was more difficult and the ability of rulers to monitor their people was correspondingly easier. The Triple Alliance also collected taxes

from each of its constituent cities. A document known as the Codex Mendoza (shown in Figure 2.2) shows taxes for the province of Huaxtepec. The rows of signs on the left and bottom are the constituent towns while the central portion depicts the types and quantities of goods collected.

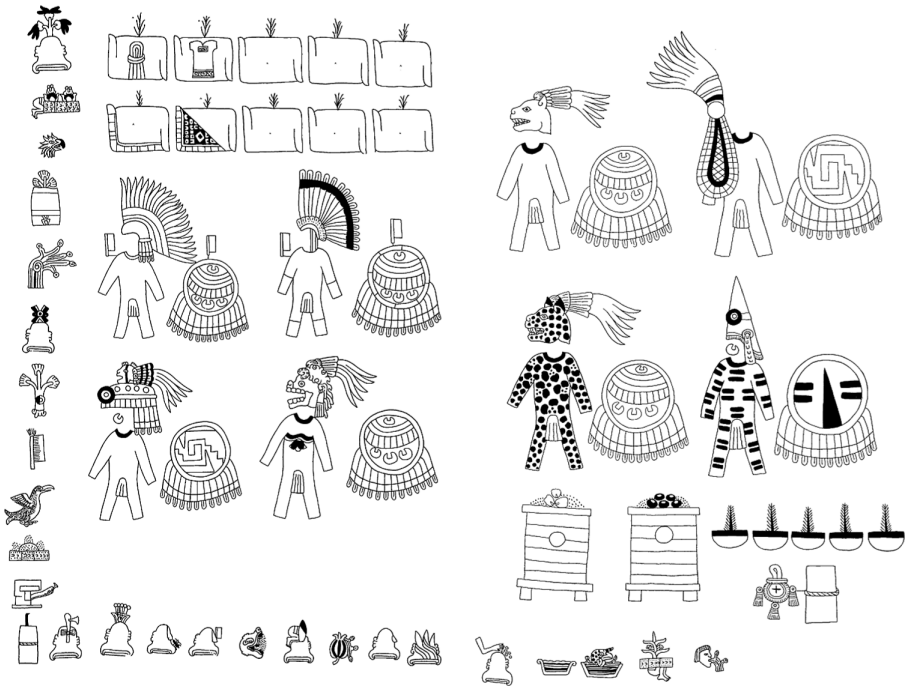


FIGURE 2.2. A section of the Codex Mendoza. *Source:* Smith 2015, 77, originally published in Berdan and Anawalt 1992, 4:54–55.

When the Triple Alliance conquered other cities, the pattern of governance became more autocratic as the local population lost most of its control over its own affairs. A conquered *tlatoani* who proved unfriendly could be replaced by outside intervention in favor of local nobles who were more compliant. The alliance also established a new system of tax provinces—separate from existing city governments—that was run by a bureaucracy of imperial tax collectors. According to some sources the bureaucracy included one official in a head provincial town and one for each province in the imperial capital of Tenochtitlan. Others say there was one imperial tax collector in each town of a province.[73] In either case, this bureaucracy was effective because with the help of extensive tax registers it levied taxes not only annually but sometimes semiannually or even quarterly.[74]

The three principal Aztec cities of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan also each had a *tlatoani*, and in principle, each of the leaders from the other two cities had the right to affirm or reject the choice of a new ruler in the third city.[75] In practice Tenochtitlan became preeminent.

There has been some debate about the nature of Aztec imperial governance. The older tradition in Aztec studies emphasized a purely autocratic form of rule. More recent scholars argue that there were still limitations on a ruler's power.[76] The supreme authority for the empire was a body composed of an inner council that included the heads of the three principal cities and four prime ministers. An outer council included this inner group as well as "all lords of the empire." This was not the type of council characterized by early democracy because it referred principally to bureaucratic subordinates.

Why did the Aztec empire evolve toward ever greater autocracy? The Aztec experience raises two possibilities to be pursued in further chapters. The first is that the presence of the central bureaucracy reduced the information advantage that producers had over central rulers in Tenochtitlan. The second is that increased population pressures made the exit option less feasible.

The Aztec experience also points to another feature of early democracy that we will see time and again. Before the modern era, when small-scale early democracies suffered outside conquest and integration into a larger state, this very often brought a transition to autocratic rule aided by a bureaucracy. For some reason, bureaucracy proved easier to operate at scale than was the case for early democracy.

The Inkas

The Inkas at the height of their power controlled an area larger even than that of the Aztecs—between ten and twelve million inhabitants over about one million square kilometers.[77] In many ways the Inka example runs against what we have said so far about the origins of early democracy and early autocracy. If early democracy tended to survive best in out-of-the-way places, there were many such places that the Inkas conquered. If unpredictability of agricultural yields favored early democracy, then the Inkas controlled a region where yields varied tremendously from locality to

locality, due especially to variation in altitude. Inka autocracy ultimately succeeded because a state bureaucracy overcame these obstacles.

To understand how the Inka went from being a small group of maize farmers to ruling the largest empire in the Americas, we need to first consider the local institution called the *ayllu* upon which their empire was built.[78] At the time of Spanish conquest, the *ayllu* was the basic community structure throughout the Andes: a grouping of roughly a thousand individuals who held land communally and who had reciprocal obligations to each other. Members of an *ayllu* could be formally related or not—the key point was that blood relations or no, they all acted like a family by cooperating and insuring each other against risk. Some say that the *ayllu* emerged thousands of years ago as part of a human adaptation to an uncertain natural environment, but others claim it emerged during the pre-Inka period in response to state formation.[79] In either case, the *ayllu* formed the basic building block of Inka rule.

Ruling over the *ayllu* was the Inka central administration, and to say that Inka central administration was ordered is an understatement. The empire was divided into four parts administered by an *apu*, or lord, and each of these comprised provinces of twenty thousand households that were administered by an ethnic Inka governor appointed by the center. Bureaucrats assisted the governor, and this involved those who were trained in the *khipu* system of knots to record events, transactions, and other messages.[80]

The most common understanding of revenue extraction in the Inka economy is that rulers employed an ideology where the mutual obligation involved in an individual *ayllu* was applied to the whole empire. In practical terms this mostly meant moving people for corvée labor obligations rather than moving goods. This would later help form the basis for the *mita* and *encomienda* systems of forced labor used by Spanish conquerors. The Inkas also extensively resettled people in new areas—by one estimate between three and five million people.[81] This is a staggering figure considering that we are speaking of a society without modern means of transport and communication, or even the wheel.

If we know that central Inka governance was autocratic, we know less about how imperial control changed what happened within an individual

ayllu. Was it like the Aztec case where cities that had originally ruled themselves in an early democratic fashion lost this trait? The *ayllu* continues to be a prominent social institution in Andean communities even today, and many use it as an example of egalitarianism. We do know that the *ayllu* in pre-Inka times was organized around a prominent individual who was venerated after death, but this on its own does not say much about governance.

Mississippian Chiefdoms

Among communities in the Americas early autocracy did not only exist south of the Rio Grande. Early in the sixteenth century Spanish conquistadors entered what is now the southeastern United States. As they did so they saw examples of societies that differed quite radically from the Huron or the Iroquois; these were the Mississippian societies that had existed since roughly 1000 CE. The Mississippians were the mound builders who—after their disappearance—left marks on the landscape that greatly surprised later European conquerors. Their societies were characterized by settled populations that practiced intensive forms of agriculture, commonly based on maize, and they were often located in river valleys with high population densities. The largest known Mississippian settlement, Cahokia, located just east of where St. Louis is today, had a population of some fifteen thousand individuals.[82] By standard measures the Mississippian societies had more advanced civilizations than did the Native Americans of the Northeastern Woodlands, such as the Huron. They practiced more intensive forms of agriculture, they sustained larger populations, and they have left us evidence of greater artistic development. The Mississippian societies would also turn out to be considerably more autocratic.

Archaeologists have excavated the mounds left by the Mississippians to better understand how their societies were organized. Unfortunately, because the Mississippians had no writing, they left no direct trace of how they governed themselves. Some people might infer that mound building implied autocracy. The example of ancient Egypt is undoubtedly what motivates this as we think of servile labor constructing tombs for Pharaoh. Others suggest we should not be so quick to assume this negative

interpretation. It could have been that the population wanted to participate in a great undertaking, much like the way the Champs de Mars was built voluntarily by the population of Paris during the French Revolution.[83]

The problem with this idea is that archaeological evidence shows that leaders at Cahokia had exalted status of a very unpleasant sort. A site now given the banal designation of "Mound 72" shows select individuals buried with extensive numbers of beads while immediately adjacent to them are the remains of many young women who had been executed either by being strangled or having their throats slit.[84]

We can gather more direct evidence about Mississippian societies from accounts of Hernando de Soto's expedition. Between 1539 and 1541 during his travels in North America, de Soto and those who accompanied him encountered a powerful tribe known as the Coosa. The Coosa are commonly thought to have lived in what is now northern Georgia at a site commonly referred to as "Little Egypt."[85] As was the case with the Huron and the Iroquois, the Coosa were an agricultural society, and their principal crop was maize. That one similarity aside, just about everything else was different.

Our account from the de Soto expedition comes from a companion on the trip who has become known to posterity as the "Gentleman of Elvas." Upon their arrival, de Soto's expedition was greeted by the Coosa chief, who was borne on a litter by several of his people and who was surrounded by people playing flutes and singing.[86] This fact on its own does not prove anything, but the elevation of the Coosa leader certainly suggests that he was not simply a first among equals. Among other southeastern chiefdoms it was also common for rulers to be carried in this manner.

Subsequent archaeological evidence provides further support for the idea that Coosa chiefs had an exalted status. At the Little Egypt site traces were found of several platform mounds, dating from different epochs. It is commonly thought that these mounds served to emphasize the power of rulers in Mississippian chiefdoms. The chief's residence would be located on the mound, and he would perform ceremonial duties there.[87]

The Coosa chief directly ruled a relatively small area, but de Soto and his companions traveled for twenty-four days while encountering villages where people are said to have acknowledged allegiance to him by paying

tribute with maize or other goods. Unfortunately, we have little direct evidence of how the Coosa were governed because unlike the French Jesuits in Huron territory, Hernando de Soto was not interested in writing down scholarly accounts.

The Natchez people provide us with a final example pointing to autocratic governance among the Mississippian peoples. The Natchez were a late Mississippian people located near what is now the city of the same name, and they survived with their culture intact for some time after European contact. A French traveler named Antoine Simon le Page du Pratz spent several years living among the Natchez in the 1720s and learning their language. He left an extensive ethnographic account of these travels in his *Histoire de la Louisiane*. Du Pratz described what transpired when a Natchez chief named Stung Serpent took ill and died. At his funeral, two of his wives were strangled and buried with him, as were his doctor, his chief servant, his pipe bearer, and several other servants.[88] Le Page du Pratz did not mince his words when describing the Natchez political system as despotic.[89]

We should consider the possibility that du Pratz took a biased view to further French interests. Some observers have questioned this portrayal of Natchez autocracy, saying that it was mostly for show: it may have been that the Natchez had "autocratic manners" but not "autocratic rule."[90] It is true that Le Page du Pratz does refer in his chronicle to a war council being called on one occasion, but there is no evidence of regular meetings.[91] The funeral of Stung Serpent suggests that Natchez autocratic manners could at times be very unpleasant.

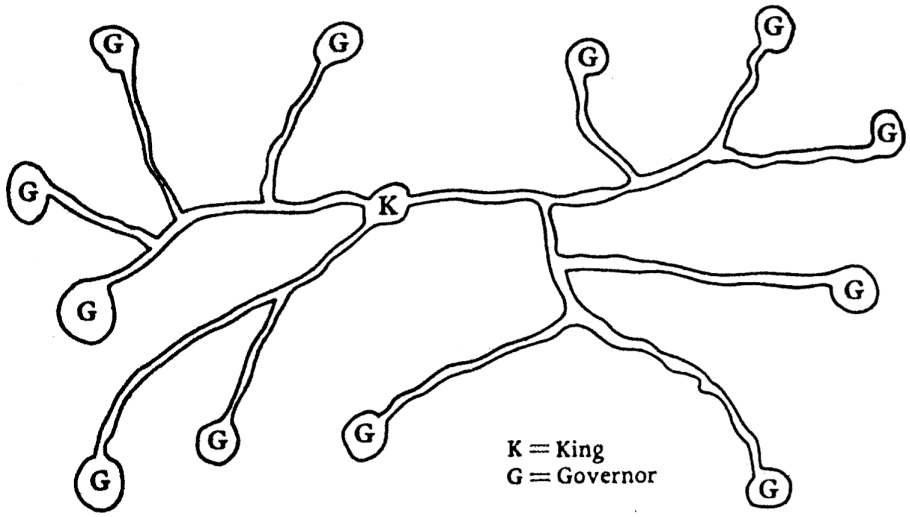


FIGURE 2.3. The Azande Kingdom. *Source:* Evans-Pritchard 1971, 170. Reproduced with permission of the licensor through PLSclear.

The Azande of Central Africa

The kingdom of the Azande people in Africa provides a clear example of autocratic rule in precolonial Central Africa.[92] Much like we saw in Mesoamerica, in precolonial Central Africa, early democracies and autocracies existed side by side. A Zande king chose those who administered his territory, and he was not bound by any principles or practices of consent. Kings would typically nominate their eldest sons to serve as governors of individual provinces, and they would also have a sizable central court of people that included both bureaucrats and warriors.[93] This court subsisted on food provided in tribute by the population. Zande kings did have public audiences, but these served to convey royal power, not to seek consent. Kings were not strictly hereditary, but nor were they chosen by any sort of consensual process: when a king died, the rulers of individual provinces became kings in their own right, typically resulting in a violent struggle between them.

We can learn more about the Azande by looking at the diagram in Figure 2.3. The geographic layout of the kingdom—drawn here by E. E. Evans-Pritchard—reinforces the idea of autocracy. The "K" at the center represents the royal court while the "G" markers label the courts of regional governors named by the king. The links between different courts represent paths cleared in the forest. It was the responsibility of the regional

governors to keep these open, and so the paths would be maintained with poles worked by the feet to tamp down the high grass. The situation depicted in the figure is one where (almost) all roads led to the king, so governors could often reach other governors only by going via the king's court.

A Broader View of Early Democracy and Autocracy

To move beyond the early democracies and autocracies seen so far, we can use ethnographic evidence from the Standard Cross Cultural Sample. In the 1960s and 1970s a group of anthropologists led by George Peter Murdock developed two large databases of world cultures. They used existing ethnographic accounts to record the cultural, economic, and political practices of different societies. Politics was not the core concern of this group, but they did devote some attention to the subject. They coded a small number of political practices for more than a thousand societies in Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas*, as well as a more extensive set of political practices for 186 societies. This second group is called the Standard Cross Cultural Sample (SCCS).[94] Each society in it is representative of a particular microregion—the idea being to compare societies that evolved independently of one another. Accurately coding practices of such a large number of distinct societies is a daunting task, even for an expert team of researchers. We should acknowledge that there is bound to be measurement error in the SCCS, but it is still a very useful way to get an indication of broad trends.

For each society the anthropologists established a specific "pinpoint" in time, based on the year in which the principal ethnographic work had been performed. Pinpoint dates vary widely—from sixteenth-century Spanish accounts of the Inkas and Aztecs to a description of the Yanomamö people in the Amazon from 1965. The bulk of the evidence comes from the end of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, so we should not see this as a data set that looks only at "early" societies.

Since many of the SCCS societies were studied after European contact had become a reality, some might ask whether any democratic practices observed were imported by or from Europeans. Linguistic evidence argues against this: societies that had adopted more foreign words into their language were not more likely to have council governance.[95] Another way to deal with this problem is to focus only on societies with earlier pinpoint dates, and I will refer to this in what follows.

A first thing the data can tell us is when and where there was any form of governance. In 6 percent of the societies there was no governance above the

household level—individual families fended for themselves. In a further 38 percent of societies there was governance at the level of the local community but not above. In practice this meant that groups of anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand individuals operated independently. Finally, in the remaining societies—so slightly more than half—there was some form of central governance that bound together individual communities.

The data can also tell us if governance involved one person ruling on his own through subordinates or, instead, rule by council. In societies with both individual communities and central governance, councils could exist either at the local or central level, or both.[96] Recall that among the Huron, early democracy involved councils within individual communities as well for the whole confederation. In the kingdom of Mari, early democracy involved council governance in individual towns but not at the central level. These were two different variants of early democracy.

Figure 2.4 provides a visual illustration of early democracy and autocracy around the globe. The X marks indicate those societies where council governance existed at either the community level, the central level, or both—these are the early democracies. The other societies are those where no councils were present—the autocracies. The findings here reinforce the conclusions from the rest of this chapter. Early democracy was very widespread in human societies.

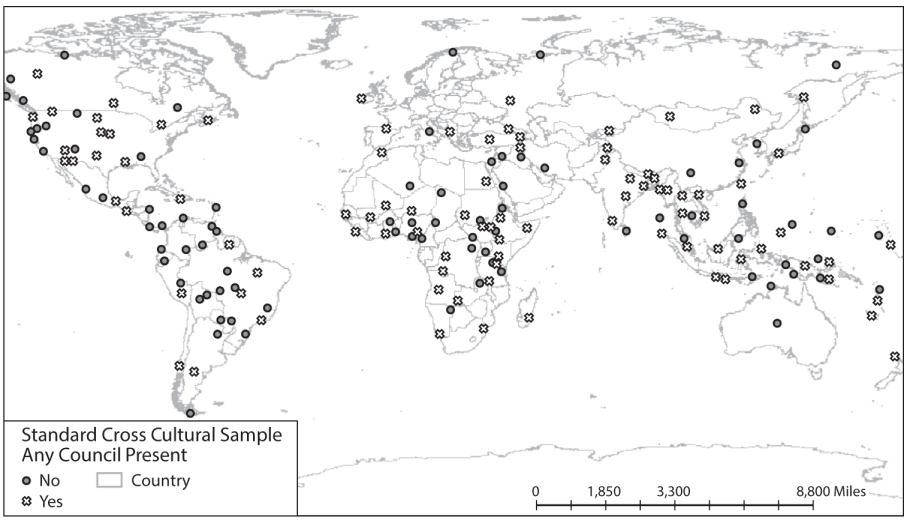


FIGURE 2.4. Council governance across regions. Based on data from the Standard Cross Cultural Sample, as described in the text. In societies marked with an X there was governance by council at either the local or central level. In those marked with an O, council governance was absent. Modern country boundaries are shown to help identify location.

The other clear pattern about council governance, not shown in Figure 2.4, is that it was more common at the local level. Council governance was present in a bit more than half of the cases at the community level but in only a third of cases at the central level.[97] Once again we see that early democracy was more common in small-scale settings.

The scholars who compiled the Standard Cross Cultural Sample did not spend much time discussing what they had found about political organization. One reason for this may be that they were mainly interested in establishing that the different societies could be arrayed along a single, evolutionary track from simple to more complex. The story of early democracy and early autocracy points away from a single evolutionary path: it instead shows two very different trajectories of political development in the way that later anthropologists like Richard Blanton and Lane Fargher have emphasized.[98]

Political Participation

Few of the councils from SCCS societies had participation as wide as in the Athenian *ekklesia*, but they were far from always being elite affairs, particularly at the local level where, by one estimate, two-thirds of councils had broad-based community participation.[99] The data also provide some

evidence on how leaders were chosen, but coding of this is a tricky enterprise.[100] Rather than sorting themselves neatly into two groups, one relying on elections and the other relying on heredity, many societies had practices that fell in between these two cases—decisions were reached based on an informal consensus.

It is worth spending extra time on the question of women's political participation in the SCCS societies because we know far less about it than we do for men. Bias may have led those who wrote early ethnographic accounts to not be interested in political participation by women. Female political participation may also have taken place informally in a way that was harder for outsiders to distinguish. We should recall here that among the Huron and the Iroquois, women played an important indirect role in politics but did not directly participate in council deliberations. The SCCS evidence provides some support for this idea: when female political participation is defined broadly to include indirect influence, more societies have this characteristic.[101]

One long-standing argument is that when women played a prominent role in food production, broader societal arrangements were less likely to marginalize them. Anthropologists have argued that female control of food production was important for the origins of matrilocality, a husband moving to a wife's family's location, and matrilineality, inheritance through the female line.[102] As we saw previously, this fits the cases of the Huron and Iroquois, but these societies were also one of the original inspirations for this argument. To evaluate it properly we need broader evidence, and here there is less support: average female contribution to subsistence in the SCCS societies was only slightly higher in cases where women participated in politics.[103]

Beyond food production, a second way in which women might have gained political influence was by fighting wars. In settings as diverse as ancient Athens and nineteenth-century Europe we know that military participation had this effect for men, so perhaps it could be the same for women. Take the case of the Amazons, a group the Greeks thought were warrior women who lived north of the Black Sea. Herodotus described an encounter in which a group led by men named the Scythians sought to make the Amazons their wives, but they replied in the following terms.

> We could not live among your women there, because our customs are not the same as theirs. We shoot arrows, throw javelins, and ride horses but have no knowledge of women's chores.[104]

Though often criticized for his fanciful stories, Herodotus was not far off the mark here. Modern archaeological evidence shows that women did participate in warfare on the Central Asian steppe. We know this from burial evidence in which women were interred with numerous weapons and from the fact that their skeletons often show signs of war injuries. Prevalence of bowed legs in these burials points to a lifetime spent in the saddle, and armed women make up more than a third of the burials at specific sites.[105]

We also have evidence from Central Asian sagas that female warriors played a direct—even dominant—role in government. According to a Nart saga depicting a people known today as the Circassians, society was originally organized along matriarchal lines, before subsequently shifting to patriarchy.

> In the olden times, there was the Council of the Matriarchs, which was made up of wise and far-sighted mature ladies. The Council discussed the day-to-day issues of the young Narts, and legislated laws and customs according to which the youth had to abide in their mundane life. The Council members relied on their long experience and perspicacity in formulating relevant edicts.[106]

Matriarchal rule is said to have ended among the Circassians when the queen of the Amazons ended the conflict with the Circassian men by marrying their prince. After this, she advised her followers to do likewise.

Burial evidence is not much help in telling us whether something like the Council of Matriarchs ever existed, but if nothing like it ever existed, we would still need to ask why the author of the saga felt the need to invent this part of the story. Just as Greek tales about Amazons were once, incorrectly, believed to be pure myth, we should not be so quick to make the same judgment here.

There is also one further key conclusion that we can draw from the SCCS: like early democracy itself, female political participation was much more prominent in smaller-scale societies. With each successive step in governance—from households fending for themselves, to local community governance, to the appearance of a central state—female participation in government becomes less apparent.[107] It is almost as if the invention of politics meant the exclusion of women.

Inequality

A final question we might want to ask is whether early democracies had lower levels of economic inequality than did autocracies. So far, authors working on early states have generally focused on the prior question of whether having any form of state at all determines how unequal a society is. The received view is that establishing central order produces social stratification. Some suggest that the creation of political order among humans is inevitably a story of inequality and subjugation, a rather depressing picture.[108]

A first way to think about inequality is to consult measures that anthropologists have constructed of "social stratification." The SCCS data support the received view about central governance being associated with greater stratification, and the results are striking. Among societies without any governance above the community, 63 percent had no social stratification, but this was true of only 13 percent of societies with central governance. This is a huge difference. When we instead consider social stratification in societies with and without councils we see much less difference between these two subgroups.[109] It appears that central states were associated with stratification, but the way a state was governed—democratically or autocratically—had less impact.

To better understand the conclusion about central governance, we need to take a closer look at how the SCCS measure of social stratification was constructed.[110] Within the data set, societies are coded as stratified if they have "extensive differentiation of occupational status," or in other words people doing different jobs. That there were multiple types of occupations points to a society being more complex, but it does not tell us how variable the status of people with different occupations actually was. This also tells

us nothing about whether it is possible for people to move from one occupation to another. We can recall here that the Republic of Tlaxcala was stratified, but there was also significant social mobility.

To get a better view of inequality, we may need to look beyond the SCCS. Recently, a group of anthropologists and archaeologists have proposed an ingenious new measure of wealth inequality. Lacking direct measures of wealth, they use dispersion in the size of floor plans of houses.[111] The Gini coefficient for this distribution—which takes a value of zero when there is perfect equality and one when there is perfect inequality—then serves as a proxy measure for wealth inequality.[112]

The data on house floor plans point to tremendous variability in wealth inequality in ancient societies. At the Teotihuacan site in Mesoamerica—a society that preceded the Aztecs by about a millennium—the Gini coefficient for house size dispersion was 0.12—an extremely low value. If the Gini coefficient for house size mapped directly into actual wealth, this would imply a level of inequality well below that seen in any modern market economy. The situation could not have been more different in the Middle Kingdom of ancient Egypt where, at one site, the Gini coefficient for house size dispersion was 0.68—a figure closer to levels of wealth inequality in European or American society today. This is extraordinary given the level of development in ancient Egypt—in a very poor society there will be a natural ceiling on inequality as long as people cannot be taxed to the point where they are below subsistence.[113] As a society grows richer, the maximum possible level of taxation increases.

The comparison between ancient Egypt and Teotihuacan also raises the question whether the pattern of governance influenced the level of wealth inequality. Ancient Egypt was an autocracy, and though archaeologists do not know exactly how Teotihuacan was governed, many think it was not an autocracy.[114] The archaeologists who have collected the house floor plan data have also coded the different societies as having collective or autocratic forms of governance. Within the set of Mesoamerican societies, collective governance was clearly associated with lower wealth inequality.[115] So this is some evidence that early democracy was associated with lower inequality, but it should be viewed as partial and preliminary.

Conclusion

We have seen that early democracy was widespread in human societies; in fact, it was just about as common as autocracy. The fact that humans were governed in these two very different ways across multiple millennia and many world regions should lead us to a clear conclusion: there was no single common path of political development. We should also dispense with the notion that democracy was invented in one place at one time before spreading elsewhere. Democracy is instead something that appears to come naturally to humans even if it is far from inevitable. So far, we have seen hints that early democracy was more likely to survive in small-scale settings, in the absence of strong state bureaucracies, and finally in the absence of many technological developments that we commonly associate with civilization. We can now explore in depth what took societies down the path of either early democracy or autocracy.

3

Weak States Inherited Democracy

IF WE AGREE that early democracy and early autocracy were two alternative paths of political development, then the next question is what led a society down one path as opposed to the other. I will argue in this chapter that early democracy was more likely to prevail when rulers were uncertain about production, when people found it easy to exit, and finally when rulers needed their people more than their people needed them. Evidence from multiple world regions at different points in time supports these claims. The practice of early democracy was one way for those who ruled to cope with these challenges, but we will also see an alternative route: build a state bureaucracy to substitute for council governance. We will see finally that bureaucracies and councils could also, at times, be complements.

What We Mean by a Weak State

Douglass North, the famous economic historian, defined the state as an entity that extracts revenue in exchange for protection.[1] Protection can be thought of in very broad terms here. It could be defending against outside invaders; it could be insurance against events like famine; it could even involve the types of "social protection" to which we refer today. Revenue can also be thought of in very broad terms, involving taxation in currency, taxation in kind, or any other effort to redistribute economic surplus from some individuals to others. The Kwakiutl of the northwest coast of North America had no formal system of taxation, but Franz Boas reported that chiefs regularly appropriated up to half of the catch from hunting and fishing activities.[2]

Rulers who want to extract revenue face a fundamental problem: the less they know about how much people are producing, the harder it is for them to devise a tax strategy. Jean-Baptiste Colbert (finance minister to Louis XIV) is said to have described the problem of taxation as plucking a goose to obtain as many feathers as possible without making it hiss. Uncertainty about production would make it harder for some rulers to know just how many feathers they could pluck. The more uncertainty, the greater the chance that you would either choose a level of taxation that prompts people to protest or choose instead one that is lower than what people would be willing to pay.

The second problem—linked to the first—is that the populace may have options if they feel they are being plucked too heavily. They may have the means to protest violently, move elsewhere, or simply refuse to pay if a ruler has little coercive capacity. Throughout history in environments where unhappy people could simply pick up and move, the position of those who ruled was more precarious.

The problem of exit risk is, in fact, such a general one that it is not limited to human societies. Motivated by her observations about different bird species in different habitats, the ornithologist Sandra Vehrencamp developed a theoretical model to illustrate this possibility.[3] In the case of animals there is no question of wealth, taxation, or consent; the issue is instead who gets to reproduce and who is consigned to assisting others as

they reproduce. Considering a range of species, Vehrencamp showed that high costs of "dispersal" were associated with greater hierarchy. Dispersal means the possibility for individuals to establish a new place to breed.

Throughout history early democracy was one way to deal with the twin problems of exit and uncertainty. The early democratic solution involved acknowledging one's weak position and ruling collectively with members of society. A council or assembly—the basic building block of early democracy—provided a forum in which rulers and the governed could discuss how much could actually be paid. Council members could then also help collect revenue and assist with governance more broadly. In order to believe that council discussions might actually reveal something other than fake news, we do not have to assume anything about the goodness of human nature. Truthful communication would be possible as long as there was some commonality of interest between rulers and the populace over something like the need for protection. It would also be reinforced by a mutual desire for peaceful resolution over conflict.[4]

One of the notable features of the council solution for governance is that to have influence, members do not actually have to have a formal veto over a ruler's proposal. Simply possessing superior information about production can do the trick. Real authority depends not only on formal authority—the written rules—but also on who has better information.[5]

The alternative to early democracy was to make decisions without consulting a council and then gird oneself for potential negative consequences. This solution would be more feasible in cases where the natural environment made agricultural production more predictable. It would also be easier when people had fewer means of exiting or protesting. Backing up all this was the fact that rule without a council or assembly was much easier if one had a bureaucracy to solve both information and enforcement problems.

There is a final method for solving problems of uncertainty in revenue collection, and that is to hire tax farmers—private individuals who agree to collect taxes in exchange for a one-off fee. Like early democracy, tax farming economizes on the need for a ruler to have a bureaucracy that can assess how much revenue can be collected. The idea is that if tax farmers have better information than the ruler about local conditions, if they bid

against each other for the right to collect certain taxes, this will reveal useful information.[6] As with bureaucracy, we should consider tax farming to be a potential substitute for early democracy.

Agricultural Suitability and State Formation

There is an established idea that societies with central governance emerged in areas that were more suitable for agriculture. The traditional story is that agricultural production generated a surplus, allowing for the emergence of central governance, combined with social hierarchy. Another variant of this argument is that agriculture allowed for higher population densities, and population density made it more likely that central governance would form.[7]

In what follows I will use a measure of agricultural suitability to show two things. First, agricultural suitability does indeed predict whether there is central governance above the level of the individual community. Second, agricultural suitability on its own does not predict whether governance is autocratic or democratic. Said in a different way, the number of calories one can pull out of the ground determines whether you have governance but not the type of governance. To answer that question, we will need to look elsewhere.

To chart agricultural suitability we can make use of data on local agricultural suitability produced by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. For all areas of the globe, these data record the quantity of different crops that can be produced. Two economists, Oded Galor and Ömer Özak, have used these data to ask the following question: Assuming one knew what crops could be grown and their caloric content, what is the maximum number of calories that could be produced from a given plot of land?[8] They performed this calculation for each set of grid cells covering the globe at a resolution of five minutes of longitude by five minutes of latitude (roughly 10 kilometers by 10 kilometers). I will call their measure *caloric potential*. In order to maximize the likelihood that caloric potential captures features of the natural environment—and not human intervention—Galor and Özak constructed their measure assuming no inputs added to the soil and no irrigation.[9]

To measure governance, I will use SCCS data to construct a binary measure that divides societies into two categories. The first category is those instances where there is governance only at the level of the community, or where there is governance above the local community but of

a very simple form where someone like a chief links together a small number of communities. The second category involves all cases where more complex forms of central governance existed.

It turns out that caloric potential is a reliable predictor of central governance. If we look at the set of SCCS societies with caloric potential above the median, central governance existed about 40 percent of the time. In societies with below median suitability, central governance existed in only a quarter of cases.[10] Some suggest that it is above all suitability for storable cereal crops that drives this result and not non-storable tubers like yams and cassava. The argument then is that central governance emerges not because there is a surplus but because there is a *storable* surplus.[11]

Agricultural suitability predicts state presence, but it does not help us much in predicting whether governance is autocratic or democratic. To see this, we can use the SCCS to distinguish between societies where rulers govern on their own or with a council. When *caloric potential* is above the median, council governance is present in 66 percent of cases; when below the median, it is present in 55 percent of cases. This is a difference, but it is not a very large one.[12]

Agricultural Variability and Early Democracy

Whether a society took the democratic or the autocratic path of political development depended less on the number of calories one could pull out of the ground and more on the variability in this measure from location to location. Throughout history, uncertainty about agricultural production has been a major obstacle for rulers seeking to know how much they can tax their constituents. In areas where agricultural production is more unpredictable, this problem will be greater, unless those who govern can find some way of getting access to information. Unpredictability of agricultural production will depend on aspects of the natural environment, such as localized variation in soils, ruggedness, and rainfall. It will also depend on ways in which humans have altered the natural environment—by introducing irrigation, for example. In what follows, I will focus on the natural factors, leaving those factors that depended on human intervention to chapter 4's discussion of technology and democracy.

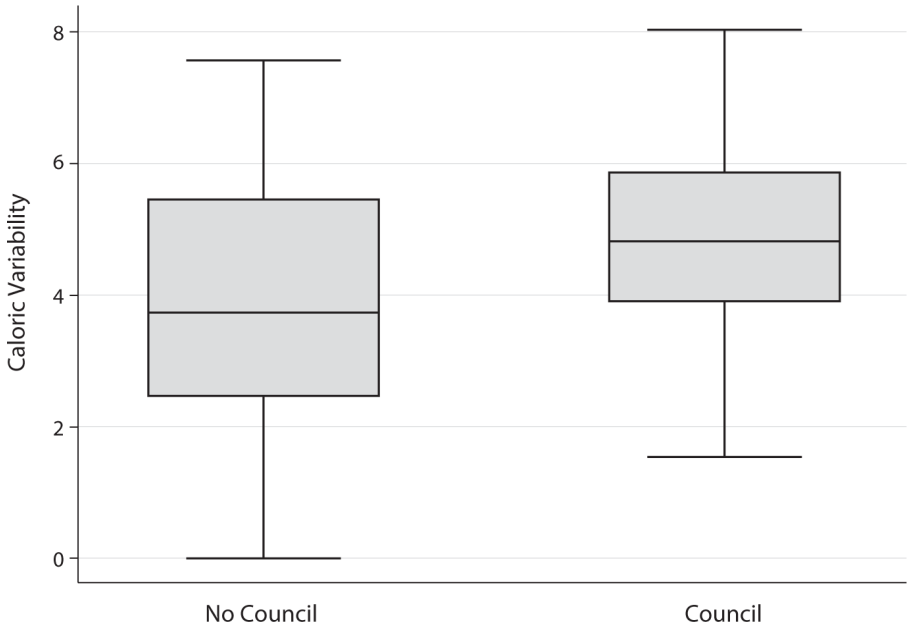


FIGURE 3.1. Caloric variability and council governance. The figure shows levels of caloric variability in societies with and without council governance.

To measure agricultural uncertainty, we can return to the data collected by Galor and Özak and examine how levels of caloric potential varied from

location to location.[13] This information allows us to construct a measure called *caloric variability*—the standard deviation of caloric potential in a localized area of nine grid cells.[14] Using this we can then consider the relationship between caloric variability and early democracy as shown in Figure 3.1. In box and whisker plots of this type, the horizontal line in the middle of each category depicts the median level of caloric variability, and the boxes above and below this line each represent one-quarter of the societies in this category. The two "whiskers" then represent the remainder of observations in each category, with the exception of outliers. We see clearly here that societies with early democratic governance tended to have higher caloric variability.[15]

Figure 3.1 suggests that caloric variability led to council governance, but without further evidence, we might worry that the relationship seen here is just a coincidence. One way to advance further with this question is to see what other data could be used to show the same relationship. Thanks to the monumental work of Joseph Jorgensen, a pioneering American anthropologist, we dispose of a detailed database covering the practices of 172 Native American groups in western North America, essentially all groups located west of the Great Plains.[16] Jorgensen found that council governance was present about half the time. To measure environmental conditions for these societies, we can again use the Galor and Özak data to construct a measure of caloric variability. It turns out that in this group of societies, among those that practiced agriculture, higher caloric variability was associated with a greater likelihood of council governance.[17] So the relationship no longer seems like just a coincidence.

Maybe the relationship between councils and caloric variability could be driven by something other than the need for rulers to gain information. Variability in agricultural production might also mean that there would be greater incentives for people to engage in trade, or perhaps to share food as a way of insurance against risk, and this might be managed by a council. It turns out that even after we take account of these additional factors, we still see a close relationship between caloric variability and council presence.[18] It is also the case that trade and risk sharing can be managed by an autocracy and not just a council. In autocratic ancient Sumeria temple granaries handled issues like this.

There is a final point about the relationship between caloric variability and council presence that we might want to consider. So far, I have only looked at variability in agricultural production across space and not over time. If those who rule use a council to learn about variability of this type, then would they not eventually learn enough to dispense with a council? In fact, we can also show that the council and caloric variability relationship still holds if we focus on a measure of temporal variability. To do this we can make use of the changes induced by the Columbian Exchange, the reciprocal diffusion of new plants, animals, and diseases between world regions after the European "discovery" of the Americas.[19] For each of the SCCS societies we can construct a measure—based on localized variation—that reflects change in how many calories could be pulled out of the ground before and after the exchange. With this method, we see that SCCS societies that experienced greater localized temporal variation as of the result of the exchange were more likely to have council governance.[20]

Exit Options and Early Democracy

Ability to exit was a second core feature favoring early democracy because it created leverage over leaders. We have already seen hints of this effect when comparing different societies in pre-conquest North America. The Huron and the Iroquois—who governed themselves democratically—were mobile societies whereas there was less mobility in the autocratic Mississippian societies. Similar observations can be made for Native American societies on the Great Plains, among the Mongols, and in precolonial Africa.[21]

Circumscription versus Exit

When anthropologists and archaeologists write about exit options they often use the word "circumscription." In 1970 Robert Carneiro proposed a circumscription theory of early state formation. The idea was that early states formed in areas with sufficiently high population densities and where some feature of the natural environment made it costly or impossible for people to exit. The Nile Valley in Egypt provides one illustration of this possibility. People initially settled in small groups at different locations in the valley, but as the population grew, settlement became more uniform. Because the Nile Valley was a narrow strip of land with desert on either side, there was eventually no more room to move, and a hierarchically organized state formed.[22] Carneiro also suggested that social forces might create circumscription. Instead of a forbidding desert, it might be the presence of nearby hostile societies that would block possibilities for exit.

The theory of circumscription presents us with two possibilities: either people do without any form of governance, or they are squeezed into a small area where a paramount ruler exploits them. Neither of these options sounds like much fun. But the historical record also points to a third possibility: if circumscription pressures are weak, central governance might still exist, but rulers would need to govern by consent to avoid having their population exit.

The evolution of Native American societies in what is now the southeastern United States provides us with a further view of how

circumscription can lead to a more autocratic form of governance. When they speak of the period before 1000 CE in the eastern United States, archaeologists refer to this as the Woodland period. These years were characterized by subsistence communities that initially relied on wild foods but eventually developed early forms of agriculture. Toward the end of this period there is evidence of substantial population pressures, endemic warfare, and resource stress.[23]

From about 1000 CE the archaeological record provides evidence of a dramatic cultural shift in the southeastern part of the United States. Societies now practiced an intensive form of maize agriculture. They had large settlements with large mounds of the sort seen at Coosa, and there is increased evidence of hierarchy. As with Coosa, we have no firsthand accounts of exactly how these societies were governed, but there is archaeological evidence to attest to political hierarchy.

In the northeastern United States there was no dramatic change after 1000 CE—the Woodland period continued. Recall the pattern of Huron society that the French Jesuits found in the seventeenth century. The Huron were an agricultural people, and like the Mississippians, they cultivated maize. But they did not practice an intensive form of agriculture. They had chiefs, but these chiefs lacked the prominence of those found in the Southeast, and we know that politics was consensual at both the village level and higher levels.

Can the theory of circumscription help explain the difference between political institutions in the Northeastern Woodlands and the Southeast, and if so, why did circumscription take place in the latter area? Geography provides one potential explanation. Mississippian societies tended to occupy river valleys with rich agricultural land surrounded by areas that would have been less suitable for the type of intensive agriculture they practiced. Under these conditions if you, your family, or your village were displeased with your ruler, it might be hard to move elsewhere. In the Northeastern Woodlands, among peoples like the Iroquois and the Huron, villages tended to move every ten to forty years. The type of agriculture practiced necessitated this, and so people still had an exit option.

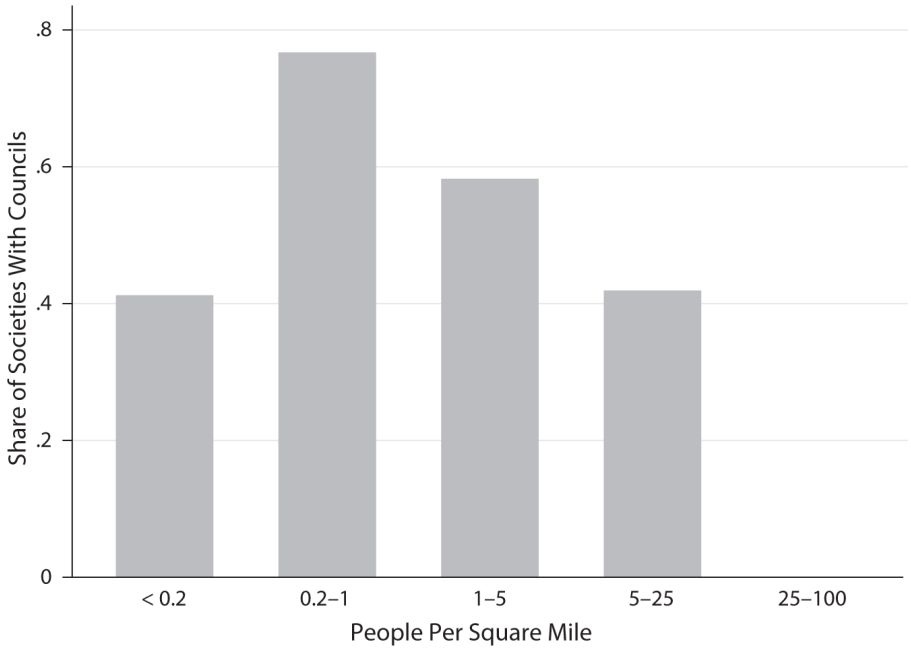


FIGURE 3.2. Population density and council governance among Native Americans. The population density represents the number of people per square mile. Data were compiled by Jorgensen (1980).

Population Density and Council Governance

Another way to assess the impact of exit strategies is to look more directly at population density. In areas with higher population density it may be that people have less opportunity to exit, and so early democracy would have been less likely. Figure 3.2 plots the frequency of council governance for Native American groups in the Jorgensen data set against estimated population density. At very low levels of population density (less than one person per five square miles), council governance was present about 40 percent of the time. Presumably, under these conditions the logistics of organizing a council would have been more difficult. At higher levels of population density (between 0.2 and 1 person per square mile) council governance is present in over three-quarters of the cases. After this point, with each successive increase in population density, the probability of observing a council diminishes. By the time one reaches five people per square mile, the probability of observing a council is no greater than in the most sparsely populated areas. Once population density exceeds 25 people per square mile, there are no councils at all—a very striking fact.

We should keep in mind that "high" densities in the Jorgensen data set refer to 25 people or more per square mile. This is not high by modern

standards—25 people per square mile is the same density as in present-day Nebraska, the eighth least densely populated U.S. state. It makes sense that among Native American groups increases in population density would influence council governance even at very low levels because these peoples used the land in an extensive way, and this would have been true even for those that practiced incipient forms of agriculture.[24] The average population density observed in the WNAI data set is close to the population density estimated for precolonial Africa, another region where scholars argue that low population density facilitated attempts by people to exit.[25] We also see a clear—and similar—relationship between population density and council presence in the societies of the Standard Cross Cultural Sample.[26]

Military Democracy: When Rulers Needed Their People

We saw in the last section that when people could pick up and move elsewhere, this made early democracy more likely. The flip side of this problem was that under some circumstances, rulers had a particularly strong need for their people. Over the long course of history, external threats have prompted rulers to grant their people a voice as compensation for military service. This was particularly likely when prevailing military technology made it necessary to mobilize large numbers of people. We saw this in Athens during the classical period with the Old Oligarch—if the masses were needed to row the ships, then they should be allowed to attend and speak at the *ekklesia* and to hold paid political office.

The concept of "military democracy" was invented by Lewis Henry Morgan, the early American anthropologist we encountered in chapter 2. In his study of the Iroquois, published in 1851, Morgan saw an obvious link between all adult males participating in warfare and all adult males also having the right to attend and speak at councils. A quarter century later Morgan expanded upon the idea in *Ancient Society*; surveying a broad range of societies in Europe and the Americas, Morgan proposed that military democracy was an early stage of political development through which all societies passed. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels seized on Morgan's conclusions, and the early British anthropologist Herbert Spencer made similar claims about the origins of council governance among Native American groups on the Great Plains.[27]

Within the SCCS societies there is a striking correlation between the prestige that warriors enjoyed and the presence of early democracy. We see in Figure 3.3 that when warriors were accorded great prestige, the likelihood of having council governance was about twice as high as when warriors were accorded no particular prestige.

We should not read Figure 3.3 as showing that the prestige of warriors is what causes early democracy to happen. The better interpretation is that according prestige to warriors and giving them a role in governance are complementary ways of cementing a bargain between those who govern and those who fight. In chapter 11 we will see another example of this

phenomenon from nineteenth-century Europe where people spoke of a principle of "one man, one gun, one vote."

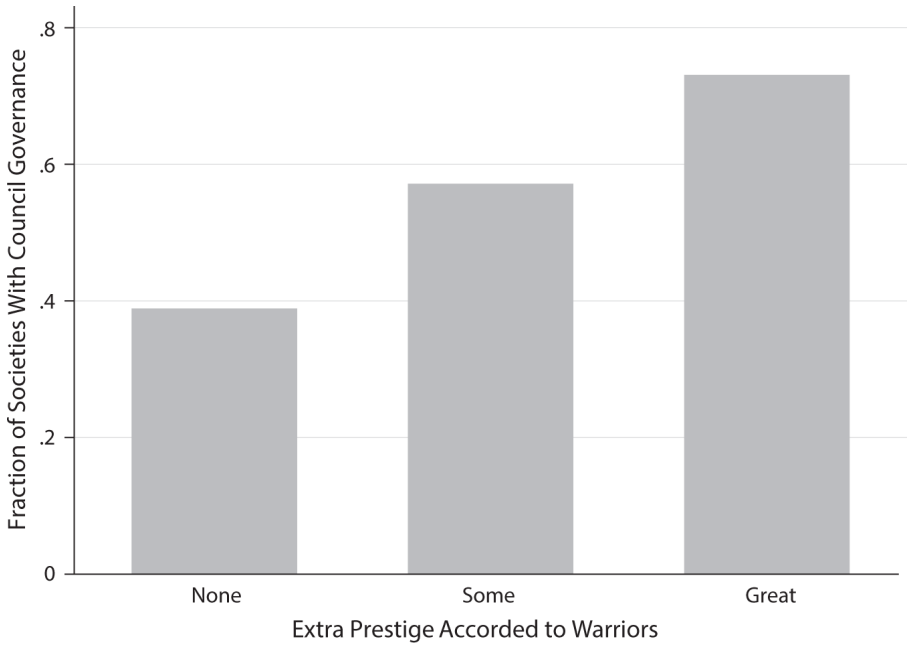


FIGURE 3.3. Military democracy. Data from the Standard Cross Cultural Sample showing the prevalence of council governance in societies by the level of prestige accorded to warriors.

The Bureaucratic Alternative

There was an alternative to ruling jointly with a council: build a state bureaucracy. Instead of relying on members of a council to provide information about production—as well as to collect taxes—trained bureaucratic subordinates could do the job. For the SCCS societies we dispose of a measure of whether bureaucrats are present—defined as subordinates who are chosen by the ruler and who are not from the ruler's own family.[28] Bureaucrats were judged to be present about a third of the time, and one striking feature in this data is that they were almost uniquely present in societies that had some extension of authority beyond the local community. This may simply be because these societies had a higher level of economic development, but it could also reflect an effect of scale. Once again, it seems that there was something about bureaucracy that made it easier to scale up than was the case with early democracy.

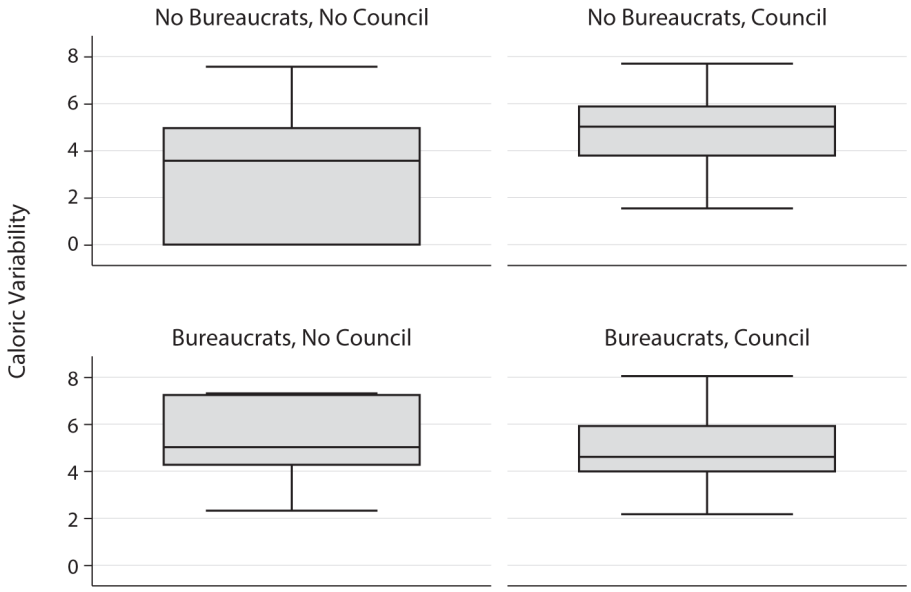


FIGURE 3.4. Bureaucrats and councils as alternatives. The figure shows levels of caloric variability distinguishing between societies with and without councils and with and without bureaucrats. (See the text for definitions.)

Consider now an empirical pattern that we saw at the outset of this chapter: societies with more variability in agricultural potential were more likely to have council governance. If bureaucrats and the members of a

council can play substitute roles of providing information as well as enforcement, then we ought to see the following pattern in the data: without bureaucracy there should be a positive correlation between caloric variability and council presence; with bureaucracy there should be no correlation between the two.

The upper two panels in Figure 3.4 show the relationship between council presence and caloric variability when bureaucrats are absent. We see considerably higher caloric variability in societies with councils. This is in keeping with what we saw in Figure 3.1. Now consider the lower two panels of Figure 3.4. These show the same relationship for societies that do have bureaucrats. Here we see a very different relationship: levels of caloric variability in societies with and without councils are nearly identical. Bureaucrats and councils sometimes could act as substitutes.[29]

While councils and bureaucracies could act as substitutes, they could also be complements. Many countries today combine democratic governance with bureaucratic administration, and this is one of the hallmarks of modern democracy. It is possible that whether bureaucracy undermines democracy depends on sequencing—if bureaucracy emerges first, then rulers will have little need for democracy, but if democracy emerges first another outcome is possible. By regularly attending a council or assembly, people will develop a habit for collective action. Once this habit is developed, they may be able to constrain a ruler even in the presence of a bureaucracy, and they may also be able to manage the bureaucracy itself. A council and a bureaucracy could then be complements because bureaucrats would have greater skill in some tasks.

Origins of Bureaucracy

What factors made it more likely that a bureaucracy could be constructed? One place to look is at the form of agriculture a society practices. Intensive agriculture often involves a reordering of the landscape—and increased legibility for rulers—as production becomes more systematic. If bureaucrats have less local knowledge than members of society, making production more legible makes it easier for them to do their work. In many, though certainly not all, cases bureaucrats have also been involved in designing systems of intensive agriculture.[30]

One way to gauge how intensive an agricultural system is to look at yields per plot of land. With this in mind, consider the evidence in Figure 3.5.[31] In ancient Egypt, ancient Sumeria, and China yields per hectare were some three to four times what they were in medieval England. We would see the same thing if we compared the first three societies to anywhere else in medieval Europe, apart from the Muslim-controlled portions of Sicily and Spain. As it turns out, the first three societies in Figure 3.5 had strong bureaucracies while medieval England did not. Intensive, high-yield agriculture does not necessarily mean more productivity in an overall sense. To assess that we would need to know what could be produced after all inputs, labor, land, and capital, are considered.[32] What I am suggesting is that in these four societies agricultural intensification was associated with a different form of political organization.

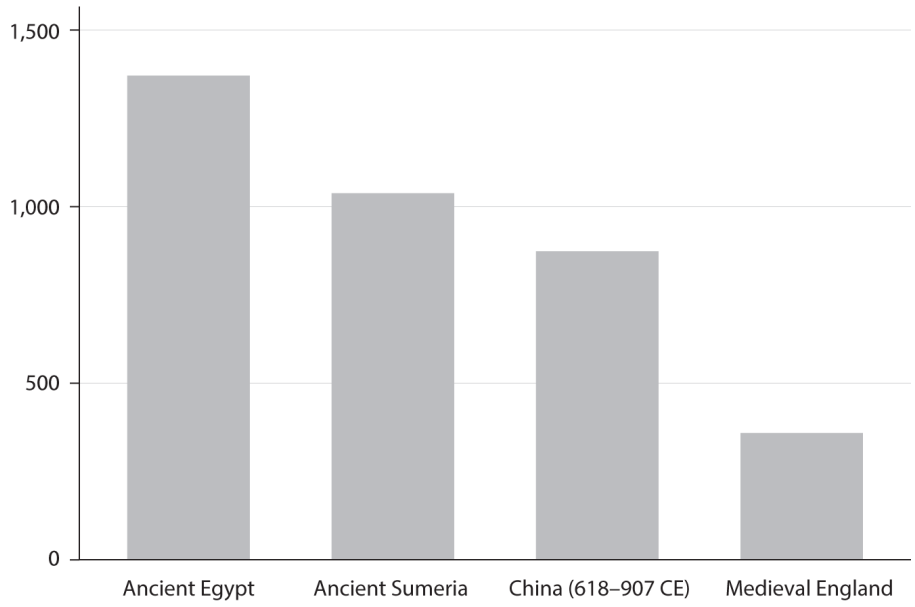


FIGURE 3.5. Crop yields in early societies in liters per acre. (See the text for sources.)

If we want to look at how, why, and where intensive agriculture developed, one place to look is the influential work of Ester Boserup. In 1965 she proposed that population pressures prompt societies to adopt progressively more intensive forms of agriculture to feed a greater number of people from the same parcel of land.[33] If this is true, then the gloomy predictions of Thomas Malthus—that increasing population could only be kept in check by famine and disease—would not always hold true.[34]

Boserup also considered the opposite of the virtuous cycle of population pressure spurring agricultural innovation. This was what she called "the vicious circle of sparse populations and primitive techniques."[35] In societies where people used the land very extensively—say by shifting cultivation from field to field very frequently—the population would need to be dispersed into small settlements over a large area. She thought that societies like this might get trapped in a low level of economic, cultural, and societal development. The irony of Boserup's vicious cycle is that this is precisely the environment in which early democracy could be expected to thrive.

The fundamental point to remember about Boserup's model is that agricultural intensification depends on the development of new techniques. Boserup herself took pains to emphasize that population pressures would not inevitably lead to technological advances. This means that to understand where bureaucracy comes from, in the next chapter we must look at

innovations in agricultural techniques, as well as other technologies, and how they happened.

Conclusion

We have seen a variety of evidence in this chapter that points to one clear conclusion: when rulers were in a weak position relative to those they governed, early democracy flourished. Features of the natural environment played a role in determining this weakness; the harder it was for a ruler to observe what people were producing, and the easier it was for people to move elsewhere, the more likely it was that rulers would share power with a council. Features of state organization also played a critical role. When rulers were fortunate enough to have a bureaucracy, this strengthened their position relative to society. The next question to ask is how technology influenced whether a society pursued either early democracy or the bureaucratic alternative.

4

When Technology Undermined Democracy

THE ADVANCE OF DEMOCRACY has often been seen as a sign of human progress, and the same has been true for the forward march of technology. For multiple reasons new technologies allow for increased production and improved standards of living while aiding attempts to communicate and cooperate more effectively. This is an optimistic view of technology and democracy. Here I would like to consider an alternative view: in many instances advances in production and communication undermined early democracy. New technologies for writing, mapping, measurement, and agricultural production made the bureaucratic alternative function more effectively.

The other theme that I will pursue in this chapter involves Europe's initial technological backwardness compared to China and the Middle East. Seemingly mundane inventions like soil maps appeared in China and the Middle East a millennium or more before they appeared in Europe. Pinning down exactly why Europe was so slow to develop or adopt these technologies is no easy task. What is clear is that restricted to more primitive technologies, European rulers were in a weaker position with respect to their societies. It was Europe's technological backwardness that gave democracy a chance.

I will first consider technological advances involving understanding and mapping the soil, geometry and the ability to survey, and agricultural improvements. These are areas where medieval Europeans were behind many other societies. I will then consider a more fundamental technology: the invention and adoption of writing. Writing was critical for our story because it helped make the bureaucratic alternative feasible. There was, however, one area where Europeans were ahead of other societies: the perfection of firearms. As the economic historian Philip Hoffman has

argued, Europeans did not succeed in conquering other societies because they were more advanced in general; they did so because they had guns.[1]

Understanding and Mapping the Soil

In China, among the Aztecs, or in Sasanian Iraq, rulers developed a knowledge of the soil and an ability to map it from an early date. European rulers did not acquire this ability until the nineteenth century, and their backwardness on this dimension may have helped preserve early democracy.

Knowledge of the soil is critical for agricultural production, and for the same reason it is also critical for anyone who wants to tax agriculture. If a ruler knows how much people can produce, then he or she also knows how much tax can be levied without making the goose hiss, to return to Colbert's metaphor. Soil scientists have written that across multiple continents and centuries, the tax imperative has driven innovations in soil mapping.[2] The potential risk of soil mapping for democracy is that as production becomes more legible, rulers may be able to do without early democracy. If bureaucrats know how to map the soil accurately and assess taxes on the basis of this, then who needs to bother dealing with a council or assembly?

The "Fish Scale" Maps of China

The story of how the Chinese first mapped the soil begins with the mythical account of the emperor Yu the Great, who is said to have founded the Xia dynasty, toward the end of the third millennium BCE. We lack any proof that Yu ever existed, but the account of his efforts, known as the *Yu Gong*, or *Tribute of Yu*, is still significant because of the way it was used in subsequent centuries.

According to the *Yu Gong*, the first emperor of the Xia undertook several steps to lay out his realm—which was divided into nine provinces—and to establish a basis for taxation. As he visited each province, Yu noted, among other things, the quality of the soil, and he used this to establish the province's tax quota. This is what Yu concluded about the province of Ji.

> The soil of this province was whiteish and mellow. Its contribution of revenue was the highest of the highest class, with some proportion of the second.[3]

We do not know when the *Tribute of Yu* was written. It appears in a collection known as the *Book of Documents*, or *Shangshu*, that, by tradition, is thought to have been compiled by Confucius. What we do know is that the Chinese began mapping the quality of the soil from a very early date, and they used this for tax purposes.[4] The status of the *Yu Gong* text reinforces the idea that subsequent Chinese thinkers thought this story of mapping the soil was important. Even if it is only a legend, someone had to conceive of the idea of assigning tax rates according to soil quality, and there is no European equivalent to the *Yu Gong*.

By the time medieval European rulers began to hold formal assemblies to help them raise taxes, Chinese rulers were using their knowledge of the soil to perfect an alternative technique. They produced cadastral maps that recorded qualities of the soil at very localized levels, and Figure 4.1 shows one such map that dates from the beginning of the Ming dynasty at the end of the fourteenth century. Documents like this came to be known as *yulin tu* or "fish scale maps" because of the scale-shaped areas containing different types of soil.[5] These maps and the information collected with them were used to establish differential tax rates for different plots of land, all based on properties of the soil. This did not necessarily imply a scientific understanding of how the soil actually functioned; it involved the ability to perceive and map an empirical regularity. When Europeans finally got around to producing soil maps—and this did not happen until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—they were based on more of a scientific understanding of soil functions.[6]



FIGURE 4.1. A Chinese “fish scale” map. *Source:* Yee 1994, 85.

The other thing these fish scale maps illustrate is how an understanding of the soil could increase the demand for a bureaucracy. Armed with guidelines regarding how different types of soil resulted in different levels of agricultural productivity, Chinese bureaucrats could provide better information to their rulers, and there was less need to seek counsel from members of local society.

If knowledge of the soil facilitated autocratic rule in China, we should not assume that this inevitably meant arbitrary or capricious taxation; Chinese observers cherished Yu's story because they thought just the opposite—the ability to map the soil was said to allow for a fairer system of taxation in which taxes would be levied based on ability to pay. In later dynasties scholars referred to the example of the *Tribute of Yu*. Take the example of the Song dynasty historian Ma Duanlin, who did this in a text first written in 1307 and published by imperial decree in 1322.[7] This shows how even autocrats might emphasize tax fairness, perhaps to increase compliance with their demands.[8]

Aztec Soil Glyphs

The Chinese ability to map the soil was not unique among early societies. The Aztecs also understood the quality of the soil and how it could be used to set tax rates. As we saw in chapter 2, the Aztecs went to considerable lengths to register landholdings at the household level, and as part of this process, they also recorded the type and quality of the land held. Part of this involved tracking whether the plot of land was irrigated. Those constructing the registers also recorded the type of soil using glyphs of the sort shown in Figure 4.2. These come from a record known as the *Códice de Santa María Asunción* that was produced a few decades after the Spanish conquest.[9] We can establish that these glyphs represent Aztec practice—and not something introduced by the Spanish—because the Spanish themselves lacked the knowledge to do this.[10]

The ability of Aztec rulers to accurately map the soil and to understand its properties would have been critical in reducing the information problem that might otherwise have obliged them to rule jointly with a council. The fact that the Aztecs had a system of writing, inherited from the preceding society of the Olmecs, helped facilitate this.

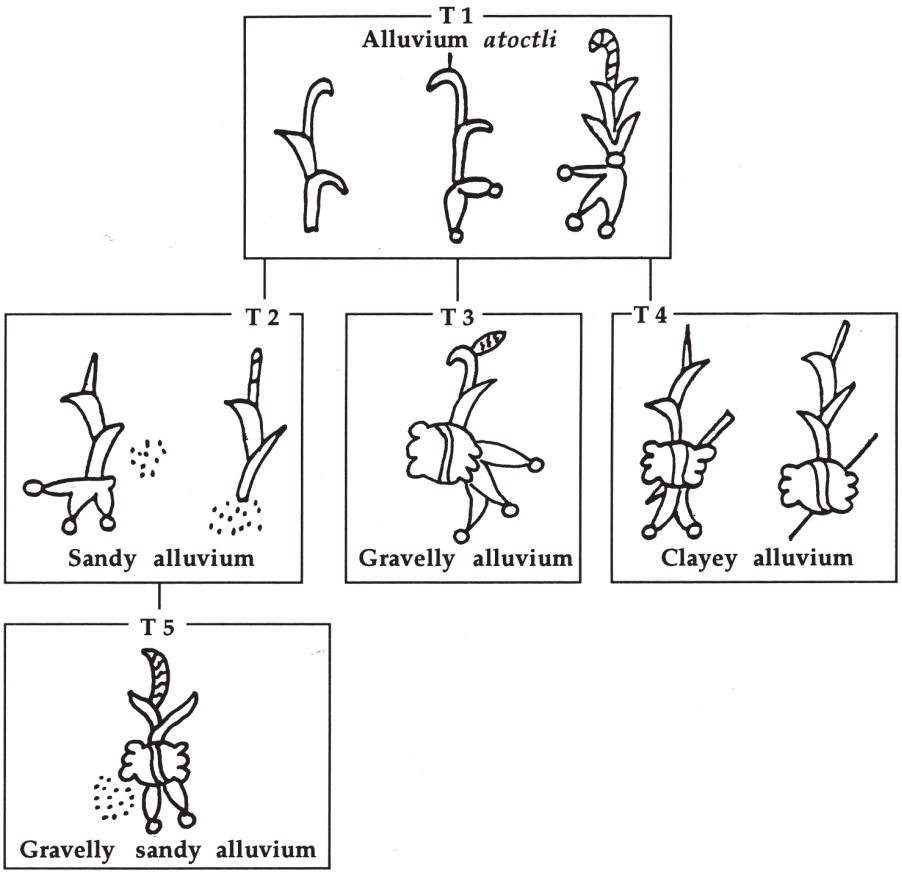


FIGURE 4.2. Aztec soil glyphs. *Source:* Barbara Williams and H. R. Harvey, *Códice de Santa María Asunción* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1997).

Europeans Were Late to Understand the Soil

The irony of early soil science in Europe is that its absence furthered the cause of democracy. If we start off with the Roman inheritance, then one of the striking features of the empire's system of taxation is that it was never based on a rubric for taxing people according to soil quality. One reason for this may be that classical thinkers knew less about the properties of the soil than did the Chinese or the Aztecs. Among Greek philosophers, Xenophon may have been the first to understand that specific soils were suited for specific types of plants.[11] Roman observers extended his knowledge and even proposed experimental tests for deciding whether the soil in an area was suitable for growing a crop, such as grapes for wine. These tests were proposed by Columella.[12] But classical European thinkers did not get to the point of establishing soil classification schemes that could be used for tax purposes.

The Germanic invasions did not aid the progress of soil science in Europe. Centuries after the fall of Rome—as the Chinese were mapping the soil and using this to set tax rates—Europeans recognized the soil's importance, but they did not map it or conceive of using it for taxation. Take the famous Domesday Book in England, the register written in the year 1087 that recorded all taxable wealth in the kingdom. In the Domesday Book there is little to no reference to the quality of soils, and the same is true of a later land register produced by Edward I in 1279.[13] We know that English kings during this era were ahead of their continental counterparts when it came to direct taxation of land. If the English were not recording soil properties, it stands to reason that no one else in Christian Europe was either.

By the Renaissance, European thinkers were again writing about the soil and its properties. The problem was that the farthest they advanced was to suggest that more fertile soil might allow for sustaining a greater population. In the first chapter of the first book of his *Discourses*, Machiavelli stated that "a city should be placed rather in a region where the fertility of the soil affords the means of becoming great." This sounds like a hard proposition to contest, but there are those who tried. Jean Bodin, the great French political philosopher, suggested that poorer-quality soils encouraged people to be more industrious and less "effeminate."[14] Here he echoed the earlier view expressed by Herodotus, via an imagined statement by King Cyrus of Persia: "Soft places tend to produce soft men."[15] This was not a very advanced understanding of the soil.

Geometry and the Ability to Survey

The ability to survey land for taxation depends not only on understanding the soil but also on knowing some geometry. A story recounted by Herodotus—and we need to tread cautiously about his truthfulness on this one—provides us with one early illustration of how advances in geometry made it possible for a state to better tax its subjects. Each year the Nile flood in Egypt washed away parts of the land. This created a conundrum for tax collectors seeking to levy taxes on a given plot. How to measure the loss of land? Herodotus described the solution in the following terms.

> Whenever the river destroyed a part of someone's plot, that man would declare his loss to the king, and the king would then send examiners to measure how much land had been lost, so that the men could be required to pay a tax proportional to what was left. And it seems to me that geometry was invented here and then passed on from Egypt to Hellas, although it was from the Babylonians that the Hellenes learned of the hemispherical sundial with its pointer and the twelve divisions of the day.[16]

This is most certainly not how geometry was invented, but Herodotus was correct to say that the Egyptians had mathematical techniques for measuring land, and this helped rulers monitor their subjects. We see equivalent stories in Sumeria during the Ur III period. A century ago, German scholars discovered to their amazement that the Sumerians had used algorithms that allowed for the solution to what we would today called quadratic equations. The Sumerians used these to help map plots of land for cadastral registers.[17]

Now contrast land measurement as it occurred in ancient Egypt and Sumeria with the manner in which it occurred in Norman England at the time of the Domesday Book. The set of measures used in England at this time were ad hoc ones often deriving from the length of parts of the human body, and there was little uniformity from location to location.[18] Knowledge of geometry was also more limited than it had been in either ancient Egypt or Sumeria. This may have contributed to the fact that instead

of deriving from precisely measured tracts of land, tax assessments in the Domesday Book derived from more notional measures.

Agricultural Techniques

Medieval Europeans used fundamentally different agricultural technologies compared to those employed in China or many areas of the Middle East. We saw in chapter 3 that yields of crop per unit of land were higher in China and the caliphate compared to western Europe. Higher yields alone do not necessarily tell us that European agriculture was less efficient; to make that claim we would need to be able to show that productivity was higher after considering all factors of production including not only land but also labor and capital. My goal here is to show something else. I want to claim that Europeans were slower to develop the techniques for intensive agriculture that many other societies adopted, and this is another way in which the state of European technology did not favor the bureaucratic alternative.

Europeans Lagged in Agricultural Techniques

Agricultural intensification is typically referred to in several different ways. Each of these involves the same core idea of using more inputs for a given plot of land. In her discussion of agricultural intensification, Ester Boserup focused on the frequency with which land is cultivated. In "slash and burn" agricultural systems land is only cultivated for one to three years before people move on to new plots, leaving the existing plot fallow for several decades. This form of agriculture would pose obvious challenges for a central state attempting to monitor a population. In Europe slash and burn agriculture remained important until sometime in antiquity, and perhaps 500 BCE. In core areas of China and the eastern Mediterranean this agricultural form disappeared several millennia prior to that date.[19] Europeans next shifted to a new form of more settled agriculture where a field would be cultivated in one out of two years. This was made possible by the addition of two inputs: a simple plow known as the *ard* and livestock that would graze on unfarmed land and then deposit their manure on agricultural land at night. Around the turn of the first millennium CE a new system became generalized in Europe based on a triennial crop rotation that came to be known as the "three-field system." This was the agricultural system that would prevail for the remainder of the Middle Ages and into the early

modern period. In China a more intensive crop rotation system developed as early as the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE); it involved the production of three crops in two years on a given plot of land.[20] In areas of China where rice was cultivated this was followed by even more frequent cultivation.

Advances in plowing technology were a key element that allowed societies to leave land fallow for shorter periods of time whether it be in Europe, China, or elsewhere. A plow can be thought of as capital contributing to production with an effectiveness depending on its design. In Europe it was the replacement of the *ard* with the heavy plow that helped make the three-field system possible. While it had been known in some parts of Europe for centuries, the heavy plow did not become generalized in Europe until the turn of the first millennium.[21] In China the heavy plow was in general use a thousand years before this date.[22] Chinese farmers also developed seed drills that resulted in higher yield-to-seed ratios, and these would not be adopted in Europe until the early modern period.[23]

A final key element in agricultural intensification was the use of irrigation in areas where rainfall was insufficient or unpredictable. Large-scale irrigation systems were a prominent feature of much of Chinese agriculture from the Han dynasty forward. In the dry areas of southern Europe irrigation was known to the Romans, but it did not become generally used until after the Arab invasions, and as we will see, when Europeans reconquered these areas they failed to adopt Arab technology.[24]

Why Europe Lagged with Intensive Agriculture

One of the curiosities of medieval European agriculture is the tendency not to adopt techniques of intensive agriculture from neighboring societies even when it would have been possible to do so. The very different climates of northern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean provide one possible reason for this. In many of the lands conquered by Arab armies, ensuring that crops had enough water was a constant problem. Farmers in northern Europe often had the exact opposite concern as they needed to keep their fields adequately drained.[25] It is possible that different problems demanded different solutions.

The second possible reason medieval Europeans failed to adopt a more intensive form of agriculture is that they didn't need to. This idea takes us back again to Ester Boserup: If population density was low and arable land remained abundant, then why not use it? There is little doubt that circa 1000 CE population density was substantially higher in places like China, Iraq, and Egypt compared to western Europe. The potential problem is that by 1000 CE farmers in China and the eastern Mediterranean had been practicing intensive agriculture for several millennia. To adequately assess the Boserup hypothesis we would need to know what initial population densities were in places like the Nile Valley and northern China prior to agricultural intensification.

It is very possible that both climate and population density weighed against the development of intensive agriculture in medieval Europe, but there is an important reason why this cannot be the full story. Consider what happened when Europeans did have the opportunity to adopt techniques of intensive agriculture from another society. As Europeans in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries reconquered lands in Italy and Iberia that were held by Muslim populations, they encountered what has been called an "Arab Agricultural Revolution."[26] There was sophisticated use of irrigation, aided by new forms of hydraulic technology, and there was also a great diversity of types of crops grown with greater mechanization.

As Europeans conquered Sicily and southern Spain, they might have thought of maintaining the agricultural innovations that the Arabs had put into place, but that isn't what happened, and the fact that it didn't may say something important about the forces weighing against the advance of technology in Christian Europe.[27] The methods the Arabs had developed for Sicily and Andalusia were surely less relevant in the Netherlands or Germany, but Europeans could have at least maintained these practices in the areas of southern Europe where they did work. Many crops that Europeans learned about from the Arabs would—eventually—be adopted in Europe, but not for several centuries.

A tour of different regions reconquered by Europeans tells the tale. In Sicily the Arabs had used irrigation to grow sugar, cotton, citrus fruits, artichokes, spinach, and eggplant. It sounds like it was a heaven for even the most exigent of vegetable lovers. Under European control Sicily

reverted to a more basic agricultural regime of growing wheat and grazing livestock, and Sardinia followed the same pattern. In Andalusia, under Arab control the cities of Seville and Cordoba had a mixed form of agriculture involving wheat, olives, and irrigated gardens for many other crops. After the European conquest these towns became sheepherding centers. Valencia seems to be the one area that resisted this general trend away from intensification and sophistication of agriculture. There European conquerors maintained irrigation systems and a broader range of crops.[28]

The story of the reconquest shows that it wasn't just because Europeans had more abundant rainfall or more land per capita that they failed to adopt more advanced agricultural techniques. For one reason or another, Europeans resisted technological advance, even when they had it essentially handed to them.

The Importance of Writing

In addition to all the techniques that I have mentioned so far, there was a more fundamental element underlying the advance of human understanding of the soil, of geometry, and of agricultural improvement. Writing is a catalyst for civilization, allowing for communication and artistic and scientific developments. Since its inception the written word has also been an instrument for governance. It has made it easier for rulers to record where people are located and what they are producing. From European experience, we are used to thinking of the written word as something that is good for democracy, particularly if people have broad access to it. As we will see, that has not always been the case. This was particularly true of forms of writing that were mastered only by a small administrative elite.

When we think of "writing" we should define it broadly. Writing in the alphabetic form in which it exists today allows for recording things so that people do not have to remember everything in their heads. It also facilitates communication at a distance. In some cases, such as the Chinese system of ideograms, a writing system could unify groups who spoke dialects that were not mutually intelligible. But over the course of history, societies have also sometimes achieved this goal without writing in the form we think of today. One example of this is the *khipu* system of knots on strings that the Inka developed. Scholars are still debating how this system worked, but they agree it allowed for a bureaucracy to transmit and receive complex messages over great distances.[29]

How Writing Started

Before we investigate the consequences of writing, we should first take a slight detour by asking how, where, and why writing originated. One possible story of writing's origins—the demand-side explanation—is that it developed when there was a need for it. Writing may have emerged once societies transitioned to agriculture and once they had storable produce, as well as transactions to record. When people think of this story, they often have the invention of cuneiform in Sumeria in mind. Excavations at the ancient Sumerian city of Ur reveal that 85 percent of texts record some sort

of an economic transaction. Therefore, writing evolved to meet the demands of a growing economy as well as a growing state tax apparatus.[30] Writing allowed people to communicate across distances and over time (at least in one direction).

The demand-side explanation for writing's origins may help us understand why some societies failed to adopt writing even after they were exposed to it. Jack Goody, the famous anthropologist, suggested that if several precolonial West African societies failed to adopt writing, it was because their economies were based on tubers rather than cereals.[31] Tubers generally do not store very well, and so there was no need to have writing serve as a time machine because once harvested, agricultural produce had to be consumed rapidly. This fits with the fact that the Asante (in present-day Ghana) never adopted writing for their yam-based economy, but the Hausa (in present-day Nigeria), who had a cereal-based economy, did adopt writing. Broader evidence fits the pattern suggested by Goody. Only 13 percent of societies in the Standard Cross Cultural Sample that had a tuber as their principal agricultural crop also used a formal system of writing or something equivalent to it. Among societies where cereals were the principal crops, 49 percent used writing.[32] This is a striking difference.

One potential problem with Jack Goody's argument is that the logic might have also operated in the reverse sense: perhaps prior adoption of writing favored the development of cereal-based agriculture. We can deal with this issue by looking not at whether a society actually grew tubers versus cereals but instead at the relative suitability of the land on which it was located for tubers versus cereals. When looking at relative suitability for tubers and cereals we continue to see a very strong empirical association: writing was much less present in areas most suitable to tubers.[33]

The second way to think about the origins of writing is in terms of supply. Even if there is a need for one, a system of writing is a hard thing for a society to develop on its own. Throughout history, the way in which most societies have dealt with this problem is to borrow their writing system from neighbors.[34]

Writing is thought to have been independently invented in three locations. In Sumeria writing emerged with cuneiform tablets that were

preceded by earlier forms of record-keeping involving tokens and seals.[35] In ancient China writing began with marks on oracle bones, and in Mesoamerica with inscriptions invented by the Olmecs. It is also possible that the early societies of the Indus Valley developed their own writing system independently, but this may have also been influenced by contacts with Sumeria. In the regions surrounding these three early societies, the style of writing was heavily influenced by the type of writing used by the originators.

Distance may help explain why some societies did not adopt writing even if they could have used it. Take the case of the Mississippian chiefdoms that existed in North America from about 1000 to 1500 CE. Their economies were based on cereals (particularly maize) for which surplus was appropriated and stored. It presumably would have been helpful to record this. But the Mississippians may have simply been too far away from Mesoamerica to learn about writing there. Despite some cultural similarities between the Mississippians and the Mesoamericans, there is no evidence of direct contact between them. It turns out that within the Standard Cross Cultural Sample, distance from the Olmecs, the Sumerians, or the Chinese is a strong predictor of whether a society had a system of writing. Further tests support the idea of a causal relationship between distance, suitability for cereals as opposed to tubers, and the adoption of writing.[36]

The Effect of Writing on Early Democracy

If writing makes it easier to track economic production, then this might also make it easier to govern without the assistance of a council. So, we might expect to see that the presence of writing is associated with autocratic, as opposed to council, governance. At least in the Standard Cross Cultural Sample, the evidence does not seem to support this argument for a direct effect. Societies with writing were just as likely to have council governance as those without writing. This fits with our earlier conclusion that bureaucrats could be either a substitute for or a complement to a council. To see that writing, because it empowered bureaucrats, could help substitute for a council, we can look for an indirect effect. In the previous chapter we saw that when rulers have a bureaucracy, there is no relationship apparent

between caloric variability and the presence of council governance. If writing is necessary for a bureaucracy to function in this way, then we ought to see a similar effect when it is present.

The top two of the four panels of Figure 4.3 are for societies without writing.[37] As before, the vertical axis in each panel measures caloric variability. Among societies without writing, higher caloric variability tends to be associated with council governance. Now consider the bottom two panels. Here in societies with writing we see no association between caloric variability and council presence. It is as if the presence of writing removed any informational advantage that people had over rulers.

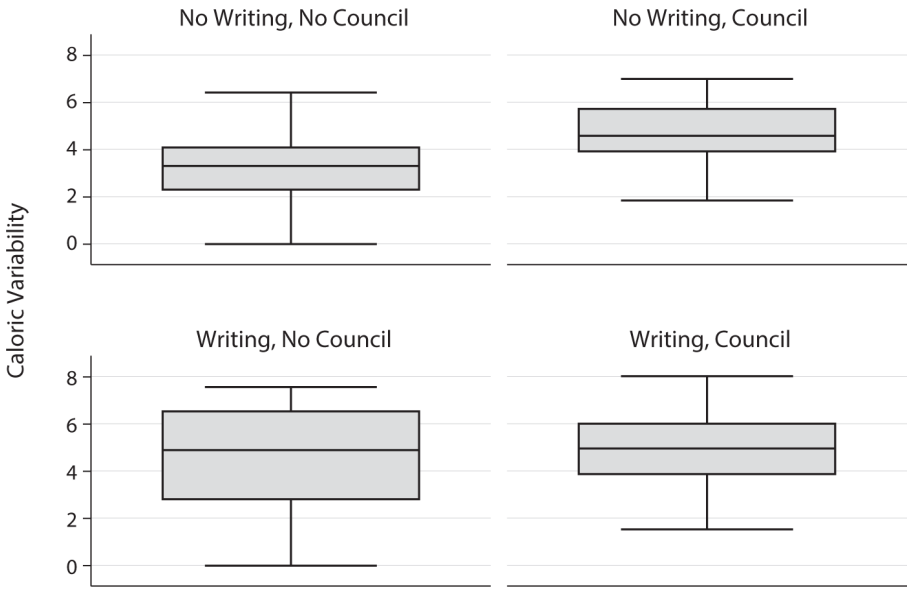


FIGURE 4.3. Writing and early democracy. The figure shows levels of caloric variability distinguishing between societies with and without councils and with and without writing. (See the text for definitions.)

Alphabets versus More Complex Systems

A final aspect of writing that we should consider is how complicated it is for someone to master the technique. In Mesopotamia the cuneiform system of writing reinforced social control—with only a tiny fraction of the population having access to it, others may have given writing almost magical significance.[38] With Chinese logograms or Inka *khipus* we have very complex systems of another sort. When we instead consider something like the Greek alphabet, which was inherited from the Phoenicians, we have

something simpler and more accessible. In Greece the adoption of an alphabet allowed for much broader access to the written word than would have existed in the Bronze Age when those in the palaces of kings used the non-alphabetic forms of writing that today we call Linear A and Linear B.

The Inka *khipu* is a fascinating example of an instrument akin to writing that was sufficiently complicated that its use was confined to an administrative elite. A *khipu* was a system for recording complex information that consisted of a series of strings together with a set of subsidiary strings.[39] The length, width, number, and order of strings then conveyed useful information, as did the color of individual strings, which might be used to indicate reference to different types of objects, people, or events. A person who could interpret a *khipu* was referred to as a *khipucamayoc* or "keeper of the knots." It would also appear that the class of people in this category was composed exclusively of Inka bureaucrats.

The strongest contrast to the complexity of the Inka *khipu* is a writing system that is based on an alphabet. Some have argued that the adoption of an alphabetic form of writing pushed societies in a more democratic direction by lowering the costs of access.[40] There is little doubt that learning an alphabetic writing system required less investment of time than did learning Linear B or A, thousands of Chinese characters, Egyptian hieroglyphs, or how to interpret a *khipu*. We should remember, though, that the Romans did as much as any society to spread the alphabet, and their empire was not exactly a democracy.[41]

If writing in general emerged in multiple places, the idea of an alphabet appears to have emerged in only one place at one time: all alphabets used by humans have derived from the Old Canaanite alphabet and its successor, the Phoenician alphabet.[42] Herodotus was probably the first to tell the story of how Greeks living in Ionia adopted letters from the Phoenicians and then reimagined them to better fit the spoken Greek language.[43] Unlike his story of geometry's origins, this one is most likely accurate.

If we are going to ask whether alphabetic writing helped democratize society, it would also help to know why the Canaanites and Phoenicians developed it in the first place. The Old Canaanite alphabet is known to have been derived from a prior alphabet that was pictographic in form, but this says nothing about the motivation of those who sought to transform this

earlier writing form. One interpretation sees the development of Canaanite script as part of an attempt by scribes in the city-state of Ugarit to develop a political identity independent from the larger empires that surrounded them.[44] In this case it would have nothing to do with a democratizing influence.

Where Europeans Were Ahead: Firearms Technology

As we march through a list of technologies where Europeans were (mostly) behind other societies, we might begin to wonder why it was that Europeans conquered the world rather than the other way around. The answer to this may be that while Europeans were behind in many areas, they were far in advance when it came to firearms technology. When Hernán Cortés and his army encountered the Aztecs, they discovered a society that had a more sophisticated system of agricultural production and taxation than existed in his native Spain. But the Spaniards had guns, and the Aztecs did not.

To understand the development of firearms technology we can turn to the work of the economic historian Philip Hoffman.[45] In a recent study, he has examined the evolution of firearms technology in Europe and how this gave Europeans a decisive advantage once they began to voyage and encounter other societies. As is well known, Europeans were not the first to develop and use gunpowder for war—this distinction goes to the Chinese. What was different about Europe was the way in which interstate competition led to continual advance in firearms technology.

To see this, consider the following example offered by Hoffman. Between 1600 and 1750 the firing rate for French troops using their muskets increased by a factor of ten.[46] This amounts to an annual rate of labor productivity growth of 1.5 percent, something we might expect to see in a modern advanced economy during an economic expansion. The growth of labor productivity in other sectors of the European economy at this time would have probably been only one-tenth as fast. So, there was something unique about the firearms sector.

The best explanation for European firearms development may lie in the fierce interstate competition that gripped the continent for half a millennium leading up to 1815. Technological advances would have brought high returns in this context. This is the explanation offered by Hoffman. The one caveat I would offer to this is that for a long time, interstate competition between European states did not result in the development of the sort of extractive capacity by states that had been seen in Song dynasty China or Abbasid Iraq more than a thousand years previously. For one reason or

another, Europeans were better at developing guns than at building bureaucracies.

Conclusion

The message of this chapter has been that the advance of civilization often acted to undermine early democracy. It did so whenever new or improved technologies reduced the information advantage that members of society had over rulers. It did so further when agricultural improvements led to people living closer together in a more fixed manner so that they could be more easily monitored by bureaucrats. It did so finally when rulers acquired systems of writing that could help underpin a bureaucracy. I have not argued that the advance of technology always and inevitably had these effects, but the fact that it often did so is striking.

PART II

The Divergence

5

The Development of Representation in Europe

MANY SCHOLARS HAVE ASKED why Europe followed a different economic path from China and the Middle East, and political institutions have played a starring role in explanations of this divergence. People emphasize that Europe was divided into multiple states rather than being unified; it had a tradition of liberty; it had political institutions that constrained rulers to seek consent from their subjects. But if the great economic divergence is explained by this political divergence, then why did the political divergence take place? Over the next four chapters I will try to provide a new answer to this question.

The Ancient Liberty of the Forest

Where did Europeans first get the idea that a ruler should seek consent from his or her subjects? French scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries divided themselves into two camps on this question. For some it all came from the Greeks and the Romans.[1] For others early democracy came from somewhere completely different: the traditions of the Germanic tribes that overran Europe as Rome fell. For inspiration, the people in this school drew on Tacitus and his account of the early Germans. Counting himself very much in the latter camp, Montesquieu observed that "this beautiful system was discovered in the woods."[2] In the nineteenth century, François Guizot, a famous French historian and politician, would write of the "ancient liberty of the forest."[3]

Behind the "Romanist" and "Germanist" views lies the common assumption that early democracy was invented at one place and at one time; we have already seen that this is inaccurate. Many human societies independently evolved the idea of constraining rulers to obtain consent from their people. Rather than ask whether early democracy was invented by German tribes, we ought to instead see whether conditions in Europe resembled those in other places where early democracy thrived.

There is one question of terminology to deal with before moving forward. In discussing governance among the various peoples of Europe we face a choice between two common and mutually unsatisfactory terms. The first option is to refer to "Germanic" peoples. The problem with this is that a number of the peoples in Europe at this time did not speak a Germanic language. The second option is to refer to "Barbarian" peoples, but that has obvious pejorative implications. In what follows I will stick with the term "Germanic" even if it is only partially accurate.[4]

Tacitus on the Germans

Tacitus claimed that among the Germanic tribes, kings were selected from those of noble birth instead of inheriting their positions. They met in assemblies where matters of importance were discussed, and disapproval was met with roars while approval was signaled by the clashing of spears.[5]

Julius Caesar wrote about this same manner of decision making when he described how the assembled people shouted out and clattered arms to signal their support for Vercingetorix, the great Gallic chieftain Caesar's armies would finally conquer at the Battle of Alésia in 52 AD.[6]

People have long debated whether the account Tacitus offered is accurate.[7] We have no evidence that he ever visited Germania, and one of his sources may well have been Pliny the Elder's *The German Wars*, a text that is now lost. Tacitus may also have had other interests for his enterprise. He was writing for a Roman audience experiencing substantial political change. Perhaps he provided a positive description of Germanic governance to highlight things he felt the Romans themselves had lost.

Despite all the ways in which Tacitus may have biased his account, there is a simple reason why his description of governance among the Germans probably fits reality: it corresponds to the style of governance we have seen in so many other societies where central state power is weak or absent. What people got wrong about Tacitus is the idea that the Germans invented a totally new style of governance—they were just following a general human pattern.

The Marklo Assembly

The system of assemblies described by Tacitus is early democracy. There is tantalizing evidence from several centuries later that some Germanic groups may have also developed a system of political representation. In a representative system, people in localities select individuals who represent them in central assemblies. Europeans cannot claim to have invented representation; we saw in chapter 2 that it was also practiced by societies such as the Huron. Even so, we might want to know how and when Europeans first took this same step.

According to an early medieval text known as the *Old Life of Lebuin*, prior to the conquest of Saxony by Charlemagne in 804 CE, the peoples of this region governed themselves without a king and with the use of an annual representative assembly. The text states that representatives to a central assembly at Marklo were elected by local districts with separate representation for those who were noble, semi-free, and free.

As with so many instances from this early period, historians disagree about what this story in the *Old Life of Lebuin* really means. Taken literally, it implies a surprisingly sophisticated form of political representation existing as early as the eighth century, some four centuries before Europeans were thought to have developed the practice. Some historians are willing to take the document at face value, but others express grave doubts.[8] The story may be an attempt to assert mythical Saxon political rights following a lower-class revolt in the 840s, known as the Stellinga.[9]

Even if the Marklo assembly never really took place, what is fascinating about this story is that as early as the ninth century, someone in western Europe had conceived of a representative government operating along these lines and spreading over a broad territory. As with Tacitus, this reinforces the idea that democratic behavior, or at least the thought of democratic behavior, is something that is natural in human societies.[10]

The Roman Inheritance—Absence of a State

Early medieval western European states also had an important Roman inheritance to add to their Germanic one, and the legacy left by the Romans was fundamentally different than that bequeathed to outside invaders in China and the Middle East as Walter Scheidel has recently emphasized.[11] Even at the empire's height, Rome never succeeded in constructing a strong central state bureaucracy. Nor did Roman emperors even really attempt this, at least until the reign of Diocletian, which began in 285 CE. Roman governance instead relied on a strategy of indirect rule over the other societies that they conquered. The pattern in western Europe was to govern through cities whose elites were given the status of Roman citizens and who were left responsible for tax collection in localities.[12] Each city and the territory governed was called a civitas. A civitas was then governed by a council that in the West was called a curia. Members of the curia sat for life and typically numbered one hundred per city, though sometimes a curia could have up to six hundred members.[13] This pattern would reemerge in medieval western Europe after the rebirth of the towns. Rulers of a great many premodern empires relied on local elites to aid with governance, but the Roman model was particularly decentralized. Under Diocletian the size of the Roman bureaucracy increased, and the standard estimate for the overall size of the late Roman bureaucracy was about thirty thousand individuals when all types of officials are considered.[14] As we will see in the next chapter, this was still only one-fourth the number of bureaucrats present in roughly the same era in Han China.

Whatever central state organization the Romans did create in western Europe collapsed soon after the empire's fall. In places like Gaul, the Romans left a pattern of organization that persisted at the local level, but the central structure to bind these localities together vanished.[15] There is considerable uncertainty about exactly when central taxation collapsed in the Roman provinces of the West. The best assessment is probably to say that the Germanic rulers inherited tax systems that were in a considerable state of decay even if in some places, such as Visigothic Spain, they carried on for a time. What is also clear is that rather than relying on formal taxation, the more common pattern in the Germanic kingdoms was for

rulers to exchange land for service.[16] Ultimately, this led to a fragmented polity.

While the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West destroyed what central state bureaucracy had existed, the pattern in the East could hardly have been more different. Byzantium actually started with a representative assembly: the old Senate of the Roman Empire in the East. This might have seemed a good start for early democracy, but over time the body became increasingly dominated by the bureaucracy—emperors expanded its size and appointed bureaucrats directly to senatorial positions. Emperor Leo VI, who ruled from 886 to 912, revoked any real remaining powers that the Senate held. George Ostrogorsky, the preeminent historian of Byzantium, suggested that Leo's legislation marked the end of a long process whereby all power was placed in the hands of the emperor and the state bureaucracy, stripping representative bodies of any real authority.[17]

The legislation of Leo VI completed a process by which the former Roman Empire in the West and the empire in the East went in opposite directions with political development. In the East rulers successfully pursued the bureaucratic alternative. In the West, there was a legacy of Roman governance at the local level, but central bureaucracy had vanished.

Extensive Agriculture Favored Early Democracy

The second inheritance for European rulers after the fall of Rome was a form of agriculture that created a dispersed pattern of society and posed great challenges for anyone seeking to construct a bureaucracy. We should recall here Ester Boserup's observations about the "vicious circle of sparse populations and primitive techniques." In China, all early dynasties were located on the Loess Plateau around the Yellow River. Loess is a type of soil that is light, porous, and easily worked with even the most primitive tools. The high silt element of the soil also assured a good supply of water for plants.[18] The availability of loess soil over a continuous area probably facilitated development of a centralized society.

Europe's first farmers were a people known as the LBK culture, which is short for Linearbandkeramik. These people—so named for the distinctive banded designs on the pottery they left—also settled in areas with loess deposits, typically in river valleys.[19] But while China had a single Loess Plateau, in Europe deposits of this soil were much smaller and geographically separated from each other. This gave rise to a decentralized pattern of social organization following what ecologists call the "ideal despotic distribution." The first individuals to arrive in an area rich in loess would occupy the best land. Offspring and/or subsequent arrivals would occupy plots of successively lower quality. Eventually, those seeking new land would decide to incur the cost of moving to new territory.[20] This was a bit like island hopping.

Soil distribution may have favored extensive agriculture in Europe, but there was also another factor: medieval Europeans lacked the technologies necessary for intensive agriculture. As we saw earlier, in many agricultural societies, an increase in population is sustained by making agriculture more intensive. These same features of intensive agriculture can also make outputs more predictable and observable. In addition to the use of irrigation, this entails the use of inputs (fertilizers) and crop management. Europeans were considerably slower to go this route. Outside the core and initially urbanized areas of Flanders and Lombardy, manure was only infrequently used for fertilizer.[21] Likewise, European techniques of land management did not advance very much during the early medieval period. It is true that

Europeans learned to leave land fallow, and unlike the Romans, they eventually used a heavy plow, but once these practices were adopted, further innovation in farming was limited.[22]

Instead of making agriculture progressively more intensive, Europeans sustained further population increase by expanding cultivation into new land by clearing marshes, swamps, and forests. This movement continued through the middle of the thirteenth century, at which point most arable land had been cleared. The development of the heavy plow also facilitated this transition. Rulers would have been enticed by the possibility of taxing agricultural production on newly cleared land, but they also faced a new information problem. On virgin territory, with no clear track record, it was more difficult to verify how much could be produced and therefore what tax rate should be set.

Some have claimed that European agricultural conditions were also very unpredictable. The great French medievalist Georges Duby believed that "Western Europe is incontestably one of the most varied regions in the world in its local agricultural conditions."[23] Based on a twelfth-century record, he found that wheat yields on two estates near Cluny (in the Mâconnais) were 6:1 and 2:1, respectively, in the same year. This ratio refers to the amount of crop that is produced given a set amount of seed sown. Yields also varied substantially from one year to the next.[24]

Duby's claims about variability turn out to be difficult to validate with systematic data. We have already established that yields in places like ancient Sumeria were much higher than yields in England. Because we have data for individual locations, we can also compare the variability of yields. Figure 5.1 reports yield variability in medieval England and ancient Sumeria, with variability here expressed relative to the mean value for each society. For each society, I have rescaled yields so that they take a mean of one, and I then show the distribution.[25] The two curves show some differences, notably because of a larger preponderance of average yields in England and a lower propensity to have very low yields in Sumeria. But if we test things formally, it turns out that the crop yields in the two societies may well derive from the same statistical distribution.[26]

In the end, it is possible that medieval European agriculture was more variable than agriculture in other areas, but the most salient feature of

western European agriculture was the very low yields relative to societies in Sumeria, Egypt, and China. Different properties of the soil contributed to this, but more fundamentally, the explanation lies in the fact that Europe was behind in terms of agricultural technology.

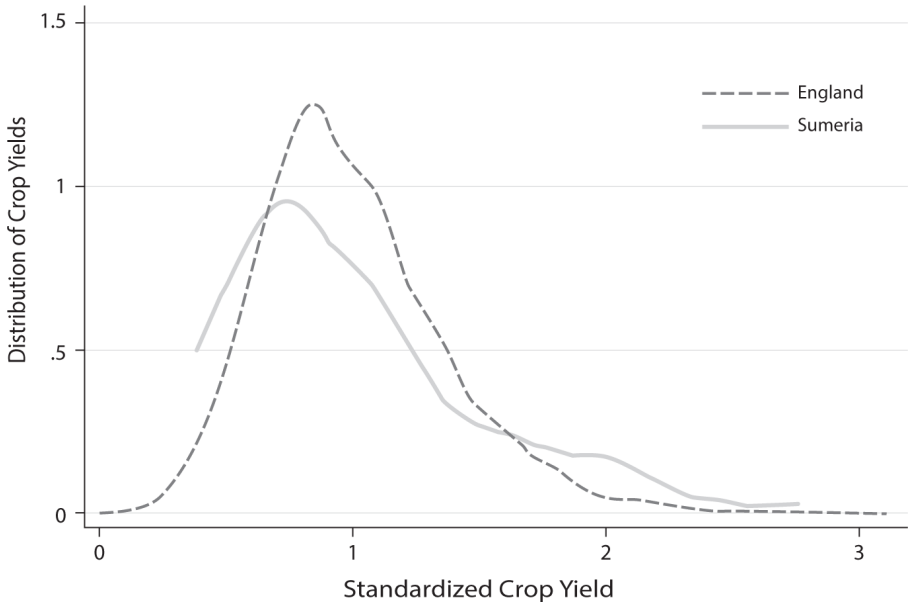


FIGURE 5.1. Variability of crop yields in medieval England and ancient Sumeria. English yields are from Campbell 2007. Sumerian yields are from Maekawa 1974.

The Carolingian Attempt at Bureaucratic Rule

So far, we have seen that western Europe's Roman inheritance and its pattern of agriculture favored early democracy. What we need to ask next is how subsequent rulers fared when trying to reestablish bureaucratic rule. Like the Mongols who invaded China and the Muslims who invaded Iraq and Egypt, the Franks were outside conquerors who supplanted another civilization. What was originally the Roman province of Gaul would become known as the Kingdom of the Franks, the largest state in western Europe. Frankish Gaul was first governed by the Merovingian dynasty of whom Clovis is the best-known ruler, and he is celebrated for having converted to Christianity. Then, from 752 CE, the Regnum Francorum was ruled by the successor dynasty of the Carolingians who held power, at least nominally, until 987 CE.

The Carolingians did not inherit a bureaucracy, and so they tried to reinvent one. At the local level, structures of governance in Roman Gaul focused on the *pagus*, or county, had survived.[27] In Merovingian and Carolingian times individual counties were ruled by a count who himself chose subordinate officials who were each called a *centenarius* and who governed a subdivision of a county known as a *centena*, or "hundred."

If we were to judge the Carolingian governance on the basis of affairs at the local level, we would probably say so far so good—the persistence from the Roman period is striking. But the problem was that Roman structures for central control over each *pagus* did not survive the empire's end. Frankish Gaul was an extreme example of this bureaucratic collapse, but even in Italy itself, if Ostrogothic invaders inherited elements of Roman central administration, those too soon melted away.[28]

Clovis, who ruled from 481 CE till his death in 511, reestablished a veneer of central control over what had been Roman Gaul. Within the Merovingian kingdom, individual counties were governed by a count selected by the king.[29] The Merovingian kings also made some use of royal emissaries. As a part of his conquest, Clovis and subsequent Merovingian rulers inherited the lands that had once been the private preserve of the Roman emperors. These came to be known as the *fisc*.[30] Merovingian and Carolingian rulers drew much of their revenue from these lands. They also

attempted to raise taxes but without great success.[31] In some cases, these taxes were referred to as "gifts."[32] This points to the weak position in which rulers found themselves—no one ever referred to taxes paid to a Chinese emperor as gifts.

While the Carolingians were unsuccessful in establishing a centralized system for taxation, they did hasten the development of a local tax, and the irony here is that it mainly ended up profiting ecclesiastical authorities. In the year 779—with the capitulary of Herstal—Charlemagne decreed that his subjects were obliged to pay the ecclesiastical tithe.[33] Given its name, one might think that the tithe would simply amount to 10 percent of a harvest, but in practice, the exact amount varied tremendously and was often substantially less, even as low as one-thirtieth.[34]

The traditional view of Merovingian governance is that after a few effective kings, the wheels began to fall off, and the explanation offered is that this was the fault of a subsequent series of "do nothing" monarchs. This phrase is one translation of the term "les rois fainéants" popularized by French historians. Several of these kings ascended to the throne when they were only children, and this must not have helped matters. But rather than attribute Merovingian failure to personal attributes, we ought to also consider that the "do nothing" kings faced a very tough task trying to reestablish order over a large territory.

The Carolingians established somewhat more successful central governance than their Merovingian predecessors. They relied on both assemblies and directly appointed royal officials, but in the latter area the extent of success was far from complete. Rosamond McKitterick, one of the most respected historians of this period, has said that "the central administration of the Carolingian monarchy was extremely rudimentary."[35]

The core of the Carolingian bureaucracy involved two types of officials: counts and emissaries known as *missi dominici*. As had been the case in the Merovingian period, the counts were in charge of a unit that was the direct inheritance of the Roman *pagus*. The best estimates are that Charlemagne's kingdom contained somewhere near six hundred counties north of the Alps.[36] Originally, the Carolingians had a policy that a count should not be a native of the region in which he ruled. This has been a common bureaucratic practice in many human societies; it minimizes the risk of

collusion between local rulers and those they are charged with governing. The problem for the Carolingians was that this practice did not last for long. As early as 802, some local magnates were being appointed to administer their own counties, and over time this became the norm.

As would be normal in any bureaucracy, the original intention of the Carolingians was that counts served at the pleasure of the emperor, but in practice replacement seems to have been rare, and the same person could hold office in the same area for as much as thirty years. Gradually, count positions remained within the same family, and by the end of the ninth century they became hereditary.[37] As central rulers grew weaker, a family that controlled a fief increasingly became the only possible ones to manage it. Over generations this evolved into a feudal order.[38] One later implication of this was that there were members of society, independent of the ruler, who would need to be brought together in a council or assembly.

The role of the *missi dominici* was first formalized by Charlemagne in a decree issued in 802, systematizing what had been an ad hoc practice under the Merovingians.[39] The *missi*, whose title simply means emissaries of the ruler, were chosen directly by the king with the goal of seeing that his plans were being implemented. Typically, there were two *missi* for a district known as a *missaticum*; one was an official of secular origin, and one an ecclesiastical one.[40] Though some have claimed that the *missi dominici* served only in areas other than those they hailed from, there are numerous examples that deviate from this practice.[41]

The key thing to recognize about the *missi dominici* is that if they were proto-bureaucrats, this was an extremely thin bureaucracy compared to what existed in the Abbasid Caliphate or China. Historians of the Carolingian era have not been of one mind when it comes to the *missi*. Some have seen these officials as having very little impact on local events. Others argue that the abilities of Charlemagne and his successors to influence local events have been underestimated.[42] In either case, it seems hard to escape the conclusion that there were simply far too few *missi dominici* for us to say that there was a Carolingian state.

The most extensive list we have of *missi* activities was compiled in 1890 by a historian named Victor Krause.[43] He identified 108 separate events involving *missi* during the reign of Charlemagne (768–814).[44] Krause's list

is certainly a partial one—many events involving the *missi* will have been lost—but unless the rate of loss was astonishingly high, the best guess is that there would have been no more than a few dozen *missi* active at any one time.[45] This would have been for a population of an empire that may have numbered ten million people spread across a territory of 1.5 million square kilometers.[46] Some have suggested, based on plausible evidence, that the *missi dominici* actually operated in only one part of the empire, the Frankish heartland.[47] Even so, we would still be talking about a very small number of people.

Given the weakness of their central state bureaucracy, the alternative for the Carolingians was to rule in the same manner that weak rulers throughout history have done. They convened assemblies, obtained consensus, and then left it to local authorities to see that decisions were implemented. Carolingian assemblies differed from both the assemblies described by Tacitus and the assembly described in the *Old Life of Lebuin*. These were now affairs for elites only. While these involved a select number of individuals, those who attended were instead either counts or bishops that the rulers themselves had some role in appointing. So, this was not a representative system where localities chose the people they wanted to attend. That step would come several centuries later.

Our most detailed account of Carolingian politics comes to us from Hincmar, who was the Bishop of Reims toward the end of the Carolingian era. His text, *On the Governance of the Palace*, written in 882 is thought to describe the practice of Carolingian assemblies relatively faithfully, even if it could be colored by nostalgia for an earlier era when the empire ran on a more ordered basis. The annual assemblies of the Carolingian kings were known as the *placitum generale* in which notables from throughout the empire participated.[48] Decisions at these assemblies were reached by consensus, and they represented what one historian has called "key moments for negotiation between king and elites."[49]

Ultimately, the Carolingians tried to establish a bureaucracy, but their main legacy for European governance was instead with assemblies that brought together people from a very large territory.[50] Europeans had held assemblies for many centuries before 800, as had societies on other continents. What the Carolingians did that was new was to scale this

practice up. Apart from those societies that lived a nomadic existence on horseback, none of the early democracies that we saw in chapter 2 can be said to have done this over such a large territory.

The Anglo-Saxon Exception

The Carolingians never really had a state, and to the extent they ever had one, it soon withered away. The Anglo-Saxon kings of England were much more successful in this regard, and it was their efforts—not those of later Norman conquerors—that first set England off on a different track from all other polities in western Europe. This would, over the course of more than a millennium, lead to the emergence of modern democracy. In what follows I will introduce the Anglo-Saxon exception briefly before considering it in greater detail in chapter 9.

Governance in Anglo-Saxon England began with more of a clean slate than had been the case in the Merovingian and Carolingian empires. After the withdrawal of Roman troops from Britain, commonly dated to 410 CE, existing governance structures collapsed. The subsequent centuries were a period of outside invasion and internal warfare between multiple kingdoms including especially Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria. The eventual result of this violent process was the creation of a unified kingdom. Alfred the Great, who ruled from 871 to 899 CE, was the first to refer to himself as the king of the "Anglo-Saxons." But even Alfred did not control all of present-day England, as the northeast was still under Danish control. A kingdom of Anglo-Saxon England would only be achieved at a later date.[51]

The origins of institutions for local governance in Anglo-Saxon England is a question that has troubled historians for more than two centuries.[52] In most of England the first division of local government was the shire, corresponding to a county. Within each shire there were units called "hundreds." Given that the lowest basis for local government in the Carolingian realm was something called the *centena*, which also refers to a hundred, it is hard to avoid speculating that Anglo-Saxon rulers modeled their institutions on what they saw across the English Channel. This idea was first raised by Bishop Stubbs more than a century ago in his *Constitutional History of England*.[53] Suspicions of borrowing are reinforced by the fact that Anglo-Saxon monarchs also adopted another Carolingian institution, a denarius, or penny, weighing 1/240th of a pound of silver.[54]

The adoption of Carolingian practice seems like an obvious explanation for the English hundred, but there is a further twist to the story. In areas of northeastern England, instead of being divided into hundreds, each territorial unit within a county became known as a "wapentake."[55] This occurred in areas that had seen the most extensive control by Norse invaders. The word "wapentake" derives from the old Norse word *vápnatak*, and in that tongue it does not mean hundred. In Old Norse, *vápnatak* refers to a collective gathering where people brandish their weapons to agree with statements during an assembly discussion. It was exactly the same practice that Tacitus referred to in his *Germania* and that Julius Caesar wrote of among the Gauls. The early Scandinavian kingdoms had a strong tradition of assemblies called Ting or "Thing" in modern parlance. In many cases the place-names where a hundred or wapentake met refer to pre-Christian gods such as Woden, or Thor.[56]

Through some combination of Carolingian and Scandinavian imports, Anglo-Saxon England acquired a system of local government. English kings also succeeded in constructing central governance in a way that the Carolingians did not.

A first way to prove the existence of an Anglo-Saxon state is to look at the end outcome: by the turn of the first millennium, Anglo-Saxon England was the sole polity in Christian western Europe that succeeded in levying a direct tax on agricultural production.[57] The Anglo-Saxon kings used the proceeds of this to pay for the infamous Danegeld, the money that Scandinavian invaders extorted from them.

That the Anglo-Saxons were obliged to pay this ransom could point to their weakness, and to some extent this is accurate. These taxes developed under a king to whom posterity has not been kind. Æthelred "the Unready," the Saxon king of England who ruled from 978 to 1013, has long been thought of as a particularly weak ruler. How could it be otherwise for a monarch who ruled at a time when much of England was subject to marauding Danish conquerors? His nickname itself is a mocking play on words. One literal translation of the name Æthelred is "noble counsel" while *unræd* in Old English can be translated as "without counsel."[58]

We can see better evidence for the strength of the Anglo-Saxon state when we consider precisely why direct taxes on land were so difficult for

other European rulers to collect. Direct taxes on land require some system of assessment, and conducting assessments is not something that a ruler can do with the help of only a handful of people. In one historian's memorable words, "The Anglo-Saxon financial system, which collected the Danegeld, was not run from a box under the bed."[59] One of the interesting features of governance in Anglo-Saxon England is that administration was conducted in the vernacular—what we today call Old English—instead of Latin. Some suggest this use of the vernacular was a "precocious development unparalleled in Europe."[60] We need to remember, though, that even in the vernacular, the set of people who could read and write at this time was very small.[61]

The fascinating way in which Anglo-Saxon rulers administered their tax system was like a halfway house between early democracy and the bureaucratic alternative.[62] As in the bureaucratic alternative, Anglo-Saxon kings were able to appoint subordinates who themselves played a role in tax assessment. However, the number of these officials was undoubtedly too small for this method alone to work. In addition to having subordinates, Anglo-Saxon monarchs also made use of assemblies of local notables, a hallmark of early democracy.

The principal organ of central governance was a meeting called a *witenagemot*, which means simply a meeting of the wise. The term *witan* then referred to the wise without reference to a specific meeting. Names like this are not unique to the Anglo-Saxons. In the Dutch Republic city councils became known as the *vroedschap*, which also means a meeting of the wise. If one is trying to legitimate such an assembly—where participation was restricted to a few—then it is probably helpful to claim that those attending are wiser than everyone else.

In the end, what was exceptional about the *witan* was not its name but its composition. Recall from chapter 2 that the anthropologists who coded the societies of the Standard Cross Cultural Sample distinguished between cases where rulers governed collectively with members of a council and those cases where rulers governed through subordinates. If they had tried to code the Anglo-Saxon *witan*, they would have had a very hard time. Though some people have suggested this in the past, historians today agree that the *witan* was not simply a group of subordinates chosen by the king.

But nor can it be effectively described solely as a body composed of members of society representing specific counties whose consent was required for the monarch to act. The *witan* lay somewhere in between these two models. This would, over the course of the centuries, help set England on the path to a different sort of democracy.

Quod Omnes Tangit: A Theory of Consent

The Carolingians and Anglo-Saxons innovated in the use of assemblies, but they did not have an explicit theory of consent-based rule; this would be a development of the thirteenth century. On the thirtieth of October in the year 1295 King Edward I of England issued writs for a parliament to be held beginning on November 13 of that same year, and he did so with the following justification: "that which touches all shall be approved by all." Here he intentionally echoed a principle of Roman law found in the Justinian Code: *Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet*. In literal translation, this means, "That which touches all ought to be discussed and approved by all." For the sake of brevity many refer to this principle simply as QOT, and I will do the same. The story of QOT tells us much about early democracy in Europe.[63]

For the great British constitutional historian William Stubbs, the adoption of QOT by Edward transformed what had previously been "a mere legal maxim" into a "great and constitutional principle."[64] What Stubbs did not emphasize is that QOT had already been used in similar settings elsewhere in Europe. Prior to 1295, we see traces of its use by the emperor Rudolph of Habsburg in 1274 and by the Florentine municipal government in 1284.[65] This was a general movement, and it was, in fact, the Catholic Church that first established QOT as a principle of governance. A number of scholars have emphasized how secular governments during the medieval period borrowed from practices initiated in the church.[66] As we will see, there was a common theme explaining why so many European leaders, both secular and clerical, adopted QOT: they needed money and they had no way of getting it without first obtaining consent from those they governed.

While QOT comes from Roman law, the Romans themselves never applied it to politics. In the Justinian Code, QOT governs private affairs between individuals.[67] So, for example, if the course of a stream touched the property of two people, then each should have a say in deciding on any alterations to it.

From the late eleventh century, scholars based in what would become the University of Bologna began to adapt principles from the Justinian Code for current usage. They sought to see how they should be applied to regulate

the affairs of the church in those instances where canon law provided incomplete guidance. One question was who should participate in church councils. Linked to this was the question of whether individual chapters of the church needed to consent to taxation.

By the end of the twelfth century the church had a long history of holding councils, but these were affairs confined to bishops enforcing existing law.[68] This would soon change. In 1213 in his summons to what would become known as the Fourth Lateran Council, Pope Innocent III sent a letter to the bishops of his church. Innocent urged them to send the letter to the following individuals.

> the chapters of all the churches, not only of the cathedrals, but also of others, so they may send the provost or dean or other suitable men to the council as their representatives (pro se), because several matters will be treated there that especially concern the chapters of the churches.[69]

Though Pope Innocent did not explicitly use QOT in his summons, his emphasis here was very much in that spirit: those affected by a decision should participate in making that decision. One of the key matters arising for the Fourth Lateran Council was how to finance a Fifth Crusade to retake Jerusalem. To this end the council voted in favor of a subsidy, or what today we would call a tax. The amount of this tax was to be one-twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues for the following three years, and the funds were to be earmarked for the crusade to the Holy Land. According to one version of events, Innocent III also hoped to establish a more permanent basis of funding for his papal government: all cathedral chapters would pay an annual tax equivalent to one-tenth of their income, and they would do this in perpetuity. The members of the Council opposed this permanent tax.

Though he did not explicitly claim that church chapters had a right to attend church councils, Pope Innocent III certainly opened the door to this possibility. This right was enshrined as part of canon law by his successor, Pope Honorius III, on February 25 in the year 1217. In the previous year members of cathedral chapters had attempted to send representatives to a provincial church council held at Melun in France. The presiding archbishop refused to allow them to participate. The cathedral

representatives appealed to Pope Honorius, and in his judgment, *Etsi membra corporis*, he stated that chapters ought to be invited to councils involving matters that "evidently concern the chapters themselves."[70] In the *Glossa ordinaria* for this text Bernard of Parma stated that Honorius had made a wise decision because of the principle of QOT. From this point on, use of the phrase spread widely.[71] It was notably in use during the Council of Bourges of 1225, a meeting at which church representatives agreed to a tax on their incomes to fund the crusade against the Albigensians in the south of France.

One way to interpret the story of QOT is that it was simply an enlightened innovation. Pope Honorius prefaced his decision of February 25, 1217, by using the analogy of the church as a body, and in a body "the eye cannot say to the hand 'I don't need what you do' or the head to the feet 'you aren't necessary to me.' "

The alternative way to interpret the adoption of QOT is that the papacy needed money, and it had little means of collecting taxes on its own. The phrase cemented a bargain of rule by consent in exchange for taxation. Much like European monarchs, the papacy at this time had nothing resembling the sort of tax bureaucracy that might be used to force payment of a tax. In fact, it relied on the French Crown to collect the tax for the Albigensian crusade, and there were considerable problems as some chapters declared that they had never given consent.[72]

Future church meetings would use the logic of QOT to refuse taxation. This would happen in France in 1225, because not all had been consulted, and in 1226 in England when the number of absentees precluded QOT being satisfied. In fact, the adoption of QOT may have helped raise revenue in some instances, but it failed to solve the underlying problem facing the papacy (or secular rulers for that matter): the absence of a stable and predictable source of revenue that they could directly control. Individual church chapters were loath to agree to any form of permanent taxation that would be sent to Rome, and it is possible that this failure eventually led the papacy to resort to other means such as the sale of indulgences.

If we return now to the case of Edward I and the Model Parliament of 1295, we see the same dynamics at work. Edward needed money for war with France, and he lacked the means to raise it on his own. By 1297

Edward was facing outright opposition to his requests for further taxation. Some of his subjects felt that a subsequent meeting held after 1295 had not been a properly summoned parliament.[73] Cooperation from the barons of the realm and the clergy was essential for new taxes to be collected. Faced with this opposition, Edward found himself forced to issue a "confirmation of the charters" that reaffirmed the rights first established in Magna Carta that new taxes must be subject to consent.[74]

In the end, the practice of consent allowed Edward to obtain revenue, but we should also recognize that it posed very substantial limits compared to what he would have desired. To see this, consider the following message that Edward sent to his own Exchequer in 1301 lamenting his lack of funds. He desired to build a floating bridge to cross the Firth of Forth to pursue his enemies but found himself without the means to do so.

> Know that we wonder greatly why you have sent us as little money as you have sent up till now, and in particular, we are surprised you have sent it in such small installments … we would have achieved such a success against our enemies, that our business in these parts would have been brought to a satisfactory and honourable conclusion in a short time.[75]

This quote should dispel the notion that because English kings established a principle of consent, this somehow placed them in a powerful position. By convening assemblies, they were instead making the best of a weak hand.

The Communal Movement: Representation from Below

The story of *quod omnes tangit* gives us the impression that representative assemblies emerged through a top-down process led by popes and kings. This is only half the story. The emergence of representative assemblies in Europe also depended on a bottom-up element called the communal movement; it involved efforts in Europe's emerging towns and cities to establish political autonomy. Autonomous towns established town assemblies for governance, and they also then demanded representation in the broader assemblies that princes and monarchs called. I will first describe how this process unfolded before subsequently asking why it happened.[76]

A "commune" in the medieval European sense of the term was an urban entity in which a specified group of citizens enjoyed a substantial degree of self-governance. In some cases, citizens established a commune more or less on their own, through a sworn oath. In other instances, a commune was established when citizens were given a charter by a prince or a bishop establishing their prerogatives. Communes emerged in the absence of a strong central state. In England, where royal power was stronger, individual towns did not enjoy such extensive prerogatives, but local political organization was still very relevant.[77]

The earliest communes emerged in areas of northern Italy where central princely authority had collapsed. The movement then spread swiftly northward to the Low Countries and westward into southern France. The town of Huy, in what is today eastern Belgium, is traditionally said to have been the first commune north of the Alps. Its people received their charter in the year 1066, so this date was pivotal not only for the Norman invasion of England but also for the establishment of a new form of urban self-government.

Governance of the communes followed a republican model where executives were selected rather than inheriting their position. There were various methods through which this was done, sometimes through lotteries, in other cases through elections, or in still other cases through a process called "co-optation" where an outgoing town council chose the new council. It is commonly suggested that popular participation in communal

governance was quite broad in early years but that over time, urban governance took on a more oligarchical pattern with limited participation. This may have been true in some cases. However, in others the pattern worked in the opposite direction. In some communes during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was common for members of the merchant guild to monopolize political power. Beginning in the fourteenth century, in many cities members of craft guilds successfully revolted and obtained representation on town councils. This broadened participation considerably.

The second reason the communal movement was important was for its impact on larger-scale representative assemblies. As towns grew in population, there emerged the potential for a bargain between townspeople and princes. With weak prospects for raising revenue on their own, European princes sought to harness the wealth and administrative apparatus of the communes. The communes had methods in place for collecting taxes levied on commercial transactions. Unique in western Europe, the communes from the beginning of the thirteenth century were also successful in issuing debt whereas no European prince would be able to take such a step until the sixteenth century.[78]

The communes also desired something, and this was to gain political influence. Early assemblies in the European kingdoms were composed of people who essentially represented themselves: princes, lords, knights, and bishops. Towns could, in theory, think of themselves as being represented by the lords who controlled the territory where they were located, but this was not enough—what inhabitants of the towns wanted was direct representation in assemblies.

Rediscovering Aristotle Did Not Produce the Communal Movement

When we seek an answer for why the communal movement happened, a first possibility is the rediscovery of classical ideas. Though they differed from a polis like Athens, the Italian communes still resembled it much more than anything else that existed in Europe at the time. The idea of a link between the rediscovery of classical ideas and the emergence of the Italian communes was poignantly expressed by the political theorist J. G. A. Pocock. He laid out his claim in the following terms.

The theory of the polis—which is, in a certain sense, political theory in its purest original form—was cardinal to the constitutional theory of Italian cities and Italian humanists. It offered a paradigm of how a body politic might be held together when it was conceived, as an Italian commune must be, as a city composed of interacting persons rather than of universal norms and traditional institutions.[79]

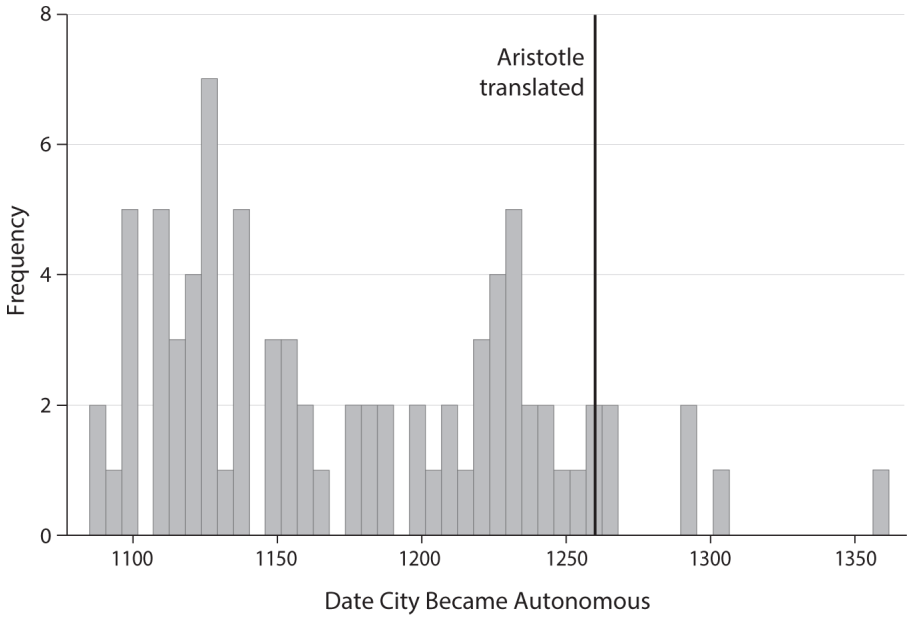


FIGURE 5.2. Rediscovering Aristotle did not lead to city republics. Source: Stasavage 2016, based on data reported in Stasavage 2014.

Though there can be no doubt that the rediscovery of classical thinkers, including Aristotle, greatly influenced thinkers in Italian city republics, the Aristotle argument does a poor job of explaining why Italian city republics emerged to begin with. To see this, consider the evidence in Figure 5.2. The first Latin translation of the *Politics* by Aristotle did not appear in western Europe until around the year 1260, and so I have indicated this date with the vertical line in the figure. I have then used a data set that I compiled of medieval European cities and used the vertical bars to indicate the time period during which one or more cities became politically autonomous.[80] The results are very clear. Almost all cities that became politically autonomous did so long before 1260. This means that European townspeople began practicing self-government long before there was an ideological defense of it based on classical texts.[81]

The Impact of the Commercial Revolution

Another explanation for the communal movement is that it was driven by what is commonly called the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages. From the turn of the first millennium through the end of the thirteenth century, western Europe experienced a significant increase in economic activity. This involved increased agricultural production, trade, and urban development. François Guizot was an early advocate of the idea that this environment favored efforts by towns and cities to assert their independence.[82] The reverse is also possible—political autonomy for cities could have favored the Commercial Revolution by allowing them to establish more secure property rights.

One possible solution to the above chicken and egg problem is to look for outside determinants of the Commercial Revolution that could not themselves have been caused by urban autonomy. The history of Earth's climate provides one possible answer. The Commercial Revolution was associated with a climate episode known as the Medieval Warm Period that is commonly dated as lasting from the turn of the first millennium to the middle of the thirteenth century. The higher temperatures of the Medieval Warm Period led to improved agricultural yields that would, in turn, have helped foster the development of commerce and of independent communes.

In order to delve deeper into this question, we need to take a brief detour into climate science and cosmic rays. Scientists believe that the Medieval Warm Period may have been triggered, or at least assisted, by an increase in the amount of solar radiation received by the Earth. It is known that solar radiation varies over time, albeit within a narrow band, and it is thought that this variation may be correlated with known periods of global warming and cooling. For recent decades, scientists who want to measure what is known as "total solar irradiance" can use data produced by a variety of modern instruments. For more ancient times another method is needed: looking at the density of deposits of certain elements in Antarctic ice cores. When cosmic rays strike molecules of nitrogen and oxygen in the atmosphere, this sometimes leads to the creation of new elements that then fall to Earth. One of these is an isotope known as Beryllium-10. The frequency with which this happens is lower in cases where solar activity is higher. This is because an expansion of the Sun's magnetic field helps to block cosmic radiation. If

one looks at an ice core showing deposits from different eras, then the density of Beryllium-10 serves as a proxy measure for total solar irradiance.

Figure 5.3 shows two separate data series. The first is total solar irradiance measured in watts per square meter.[83] The second is the fraction of European cities that were politically autonomous in a given year.[84] If we first focus our attention on events after the year 1100, we see a clear pattern. As total solar irradiance rose, the number of autonomous city republics also rose, albeit with a lag. This is exactly what we would expect if a changing climate were driving things—there would be some lag between increased agricultural production and city development. After the end of the thirteenth century, we see the exact opposite trends taking place. Total solar irradiance began to decrease, inaugurating a new climate phase commonly referred to as the Little Ice Age. During this period, the fraction of European cities that remained autonomous shrunk, and once again, the trend in city autonomy lagged that for solar irradiance.

The data on total solar irradiance reinforce the idea that the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages drove early democracy. But as I will discuss in the next section, development alone did not deliver the goods. To see this, we need to recognize that China also had a commercial revolution around the same time that Europe did. As with Europe, it is plausible that this was fed by a favorable climate driven by heightened solar activity. But there was one very big difference: Chinese emperors had a state bureaucracy to control and tax their cities while European monarchs did not.

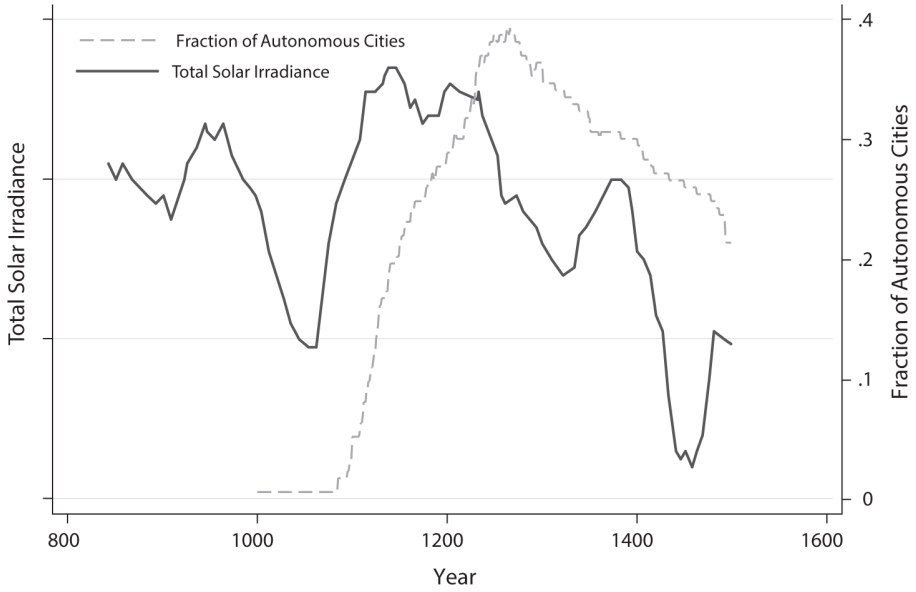


FIGURE 5.3. Total solar irradiance and city-state development. The figure graphs the fraction of European cities that were politically autonomous against estimated total solar irradiance. The source for the autonomous cities data is Stasavage 2014. The solar irradiance data are from Bard et al. 2000.

The Absence of a Central State Bureaucracy

When we think about Europe's communal movement in cross-regional perspective, we can better see how and why it developed: it was not just climate, it was also the weakness of central state bureaucracies. We see evidence of this in the way that European rulers became dependent on the administrative capacity of their autonomous cities. Europe's cities were able to issue long-term debt several centuries before the continent's monarchs were able to do so, and when monarchs first began to borrow long term, they did so by working through their cities.[85] In the absence of central state coercive power, commercial growth reinforced the political power of Europe's autonomous cities.

One might ask if autonomous cities themselves had bureaucracies that generated administrative capacity, and if so then why did bureaucracy—in this instance—not result in a shift to autocracy?[86] Historians of the communal movement suggest that there was a tendency for political participation in autonomous cities to become more circumscribed, but they rarely speak of a shift to autocracy. The exception was in those cases, such as Florence, where a prince established control over a larger region in which a city was located, and as part of this the city lost autonomy.[87]

Elsewhere, even when participation became circumscribed, governance still remained collective. It is also the case that in a number of cities participation actually widened over time as craft guilds gained representation on city councils.[88]

One reason why bureaucracy in autonomous cities did not result in autocracy may involve scale. In autonomous cities, the scale of governance remained one where people could continue to effectively pose constraints on government, and Susan Reynolds, the noted historian of the period, has suggested that this was a general phenomenon.[89]

A second reason why autonomous cities did not become autocracies has to do with the sequencing. By all accounts, autonomous cities initially involved broad, participatory governance in the absence of an established bureaucracy, and bureaucracy came later.[90] In this, as in so many ways, the political development of Europe's autonomous cities presaged what would later happen in larger territorial states.

The development of Chinese cities provides the most striking contrast with western Europe. We will see in the next chapter that like western Europe, China also experienced a commercial revolution in the early part of the Song dynasty, which ruled from 960 to 1279. But Chinese cities did not become autonomous. The rulers of the Song used their existing bureaucratic base to set up a system for directly taxing commerce rather than relying on autonomous cities to do this for them. Indirect taxes on commerce would prove to be a major source of revenue for Song rulers, who, we should remember, were able to extract a tenth of GDP or more in taxes.

A Theory of Political Representation

The emergence of autonomous cities posed a thorny question for European rulers. Since Carolingian times and before it had been a practice to call together eminent people from a kingdom to discuss common affairs. This practice did not require an advanced theory of political representation—people just showed up because to a great extent they were representing themselves. The emergence of autonomous cities presented a challenge to this system because cities were groups of individuals that governed themselves in republican fashion. So, how could a city gain entrance to an assembly of individuals? The solution adopted was to make a city a fictitious person. Strikingly, this same idea never took hold in the Islamic Middle East, and this would have long-run implications.[91]

As was true for the use of the phrase *quod omnes tangit*, the practice of thinking of an organization as a fictitious person appears to have occurred first in the Catholic Church before subsequently spreading to assemblies convened by secular rulers. As we saw earlier, when Pope Innocent III convened the Fourth Lateran Council, which took place from 1213 to 1215, he explicitly included not only individuals who could represent themselves but also "deans," "provosts," and other officials from individual church chapters. This shift was, in all likelihood, facilitated by the fact that church leaders already disposed of the idea that one person could symbolically represent a collectivity. Brian Tierney, the famous historian of the medieval church, showed that twelfth-century church thinkers frequently referred to this idea of a fictitious person; when they did so they often harkened back to the phrase of Saint Augustine that "when Peter received the keys, he signified the Holy Church."[92]

Given the precedent set by the Fourth Lateran Council, it was no accident that efforts to introduce representatives of towns into princely assemblies also occurred around this time, but this was not a simple story where the church created a precedent, and secular rulers then followed. Representatives of towns may have been summoned to the Cortes of Aragon as early as 1164, a half century before the Fourth Lateran Council.[93] This may have happened again in 1214 when the cities of Aragon and Catalonia were each called to select ten men to represent their

towns at an assembly held at Lérida.[94] We have firmer evidence for participation of representatives of the towns in a Catalonian assembly in 1228.[95] This practice soon spread widely throughout western Europe, and to England with the parliament convened by Simon de Montfort in 1265 and the subsequent "Model Parliament" convened by King Edward I in 1295.

The final twist to this story of urban representation involved yet another way in which medieval Europeans used a term from Roman governance while fundamentally reshaping it. Town representatives in Catalonian and Aragonese assemblies were often referred to as *procuradores*, or *procurators* to use the Latin term.[96] In the Roman Empire a *procurator* was a bureaucrat appointed by the center, and the term was often used as a title for those who served as governors of individual provinces. Individual *procurators* were not chosen by the inhabitants of a province—they were imposed by Rome.

In the Iberian Peninsula in medieval times the term *procurator* was recycled to mean the exact opposite of what it had meant for the Romans. Rather than being chosen by the center, and acting in the interest of the center, a *procurator* was now chosen by individual towns with the goal of acting not only on their behalf but also in their interest. As we will see in the next section, to achieve this goal towns gave their *procurators* strict mandates.

The Importance of Mandates

Once Europeans had established a practice whereby one person could represent an entire town, the next question was how the inhabitants of that town might control the actions of the representative. As I said in chapter 1, it is a hallmark of modern democracy that the only direct control constituents have over their representatives is at election time. Representatives may promise to take certain actions, but in a modern democracy there is generally only one way for citizens to punish politicians for not keeping such promises, and that is at the ballot box.

The medieval European practice of binding representatives with mandates was very different from modern democratic practice. Instead of representatives having the liberty to support or oppose policies as they saw fit, they were instead given strict instructions regarding what they could or could not do. The main motivation for the mandate system was the fear that representatives would be captured, co-opted, or corrupted by the center if no mandate were present. One common corollary to this practice was that if an assembly decided something that you as a representative opposed, then your constituents would not feel bound by it. This fits the early democratic pattern we saw previously with societies such as the Huron. If one group opposed a collective decision, they could simply opt not to participate.

To see how mandates with representatives were sometimes enforced, consider the case of Roderigo de Tordesillas. He was sent by the city of Segovia to the Spanish Cortes of 1520, the main representative assembly of the kingdom. Roderigo deviated from the explicit mandate his town had given him by agreeing to new taxes sought by the Crown. Upon returning to Segovia, he was tried by members of his community for deviating from the established, and sworn, mandate. He was punished by being dragged through the streets, killed, and then having his body hung upside down in the place where criminals were executed. Not yet seeing this as sufficient punishment, the population finished things off by burning Roderigo's house down.[97]

The sanction that Roderigo de Tordesillas suffered was exceptional; the attempt by the citizens of Segovia to enforce a binding mandate was much less so. The use of mandates by towns sending representatives to assemblies

was so widespread that it can be said to have been the norm. Mandates were widely applied by towns in the Iberian Peninsula who sent representatives to assemblies.[98] The same was true of assemblies in the Dutch Republic. The mandate system was also the norm in the French Estates General when it met.[99]

As one might guess, European monarchs were not enamored with the practice of mandates. In the best of cases, it made for unwieldy decision making. This was especially true when, in the midst of an assembly, representatives felt obliged to refer back to their constituents to ask their opinion about new events or new propositions. Representatives bound by strict mandates were also less susceptible to other forms of influence by rulers—some suggest that Roderigo de Tordesillas received a cash payment in exchange for voting contrary to the instructions provided by his constituents.

Faced with deputies bound by strict mandates, European princes had to come up with a strategy to subvert their effect. Once again, a phrase adapted from Roman law came in handy. In the year 227 Emperor Alexander Severus had declared that if a principal gave authority to a proctor to settle a suit for them, and the proctor departed from their official mandate, then the principal could not be disadvantaged by such actions. However, if the proctor had been given what was described as *plenam potestatem agendi*, or "full powers of agency," then the court would not need to rescind its judgment even if this was detrimental to the principal.

Roughly a thousand years after Alexander Severus first established the principle, medieval Europeans would find a new use for what they would now call *plena potestas*, or simply "full powers." When Pope Innocent III convened an assembly in the year 1200, he requested that representatives come with full powers granted.[100] In 1268 the phrase was used in summoning representatives to the English Parliament. This was also done with the Estates General of France in 1302 and the Cortes of Aragon in 1307.[101]

While monarchs generally liked the idea of *plena potestas*, their attempt to use the term often failed to work. In the case of the Cortes of Castille, individual towns continuously resisted efforts by the Crown to have deputies come with full powers. In the case of the assembly called by Philip

the Fair of France in 1302, deputies officially came armed with full powers, but this involved the power to consent to taxation in only a very general sense. To actually raise any money, Philip was forced into a lengthy series of subsequent negotiations with individual towns after the Estates General had ended.

The place in Europe where *plena potestas* really took off was in England. As early as the fourteenth century there was no longer any mention of mandates or to refer back to constituencies for making decisions. Simultaneously, there was a practice whereby majority decisions bound all, rather than having individual localities be able to opt out. All of these are crucial elements of modern democracy. I will consider this transition at length in chapter 9.

Philip the Fair's Attempt at Autocracy

There were some rulers in western Europe who tried to govern in a more autocratic manner, and their limited degree of success tells us much about the underlying conditions at play. In Capetian France, a steady run of uncontested leadership transitions and competent monarchs helped create the largest kingdom in western Europe. Here I will focus on the case of Philip the Fair, the best-known member of the dynasty. Philip was born in 1268 in Fontainebleau, a decade after the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in the Middle East and a decade before the fall of the Song dynasty in China. He reigned from 1285 to 1314.

Though he is sometimes described as a state builder and centralizer, Philip's story better demonstrates the inherent limitations on autocratic rule in Europe. Philip paid limited heed to the need to obtain consent, but without a state apparatus of his own, this strategy met with incomplete success. Even at the apogee of his reign, the French state was immeasurably weaker than was the Chinese state under the Song or the Islamic Caliphate under the Abbasids.

Philip the Fair's Assemblies

Philip the Fair used assembly politics in a fundamentally different way than many other European rulers. The first assembly of the whole French kingdom occurred in 1302, near the midpoint in his reign. In subsequent years, this would be called the first meeting of France's Estates General, but no one called it that at the time. This first meeting was, by all accounts, an exercise in royal propaganda.[102]

Beginning on February 15, 1302, Philip began sending out convocations for an assembly to be held in Paris on April 8, and these letters of convocation made explicit reference to the principle of *quod omnes tangit*.[103] But they also deviated from the original phrase in a very important way. Instead of referring to the "approval," or *approbare*, of all, the letters instead substituted the word *deliberare*, or "deliberate." In other words, this was to be an assembly where there would be deliberation but the question of approval was seemingly off the table.

To evacuate any reference to the need for consent, those who wrote the letters of convocation for Philip also sought further ways to strengthen the Crown's position. Chief among these was the statement that all representatives must have *plena potestas* and therefore could not be bound by any mandates from their constituencies. However, in this instance the evidence shows that Philip was not completely successful. A number of individual communities gave their deputies full powers, but many others did not.[104]

What we know about the actual discussions at the assembly of 1302 will be familiar to anyone who has ever sat through a group or committee meeting in which the result was preordained. The assembly, which was held in Notre Dame cathedral, opened with a counselor of the king laying out the differences of opinion between the French Crown and the pope. Then the king himself made a long speech that emphasized his prerogatives. After this point, each of the three orders was invited to deliberate separately. They then returned and each announced their full support for the king without further discussion.[105]

What we get from all this is a sense that Philip the Fair adopted the principle of *quod omnes tangit* in about the same way that the leaders of the Soviet Union adopted universal suffrage—a practice that had become the spirit of the times was fine as long as strict controls were placed on its use.

Philip the Fair Had No State

Philip the Fair elaborated an autocratic model of governance combined with a veneer of rule by consent, but he lacked a bureaucracy. When Philip made a tax proposal at one of his assemblies, the consent that was obtained was of a broad and very general form, as in acceptance of taxation in principle. The question was how to assess and collect it.

To think about Philip the Fair's ability to raise revenue, we need to first recognize that according to one popular fiscal theory of the time, a king should not be raising any revenue at all. When Philip ascended to the throne, French fiscal doctrine suggested that the king should draw revenues exclusively from his own royal domains instead of by taxing his own subjects. This idea became associated with the phrase "le roi doit vivre du sien" or "the king must live of his own."[106] No one ever said anything like

this in the Middle East or in China. In 1271 Thomas Aquinas offered the caveat that if in exceptional circumstances the king's domain income was insufficient, then a tax on his Christian subjects was legitimate as long as the expenses were for the common good. No such protection was offered for non-Christians.

Philip's reign was characterized by incessant warfare. Under these circumstances the exceptional became commonplace, and he moved France in the direction of having permanent royal taxation. This taxation came in several different forms, but a crucial difference from the Song dynasty and the Abbasid Caliphate was that there was no direct tax on agricultural output. Joseph Strayer laid out six ways in which Philip taxed his subjects.[107] The first and most significant source of revenue involved taxes on church income. The second type involved more general taxes on property. The third type involved sales taxes. As Philip lacked the fiscal machinery to collect these directly, they were instead collected by the officials of individual French towns. Other taxes involved those pertaining to foreign trade, certain occupations like moneylending, and forced loans. Philip did create an incipient tax bureaucracy, but it was very limited in both numbers and effectiveness.[108]

In spite of having a broad panoply of taxes to choose from, the level of revenue extraction that Philip achieved paled in comparison with that of the Song dynasty or the Abbasid Caliphate, or a number of other non-European societies for that matter. The scattered nature of royal accounts in France makes it difficult to produce a firm number for Philip's revenues, but one source does report the total quantity of "extraordinary" taxes Philip levied between 1295 and 1314 as 10,625,000 *livres tournois*.[109] Using any reasonable estimates for GDP per capita and population, this was less than 1 percent of GDP in taxes per year.

The Prussian Alternative

If Philip the Fair made an early attempt at establishing autocracy in Europe, three centuries later the Hohenzollerns in Prussia would be much more successful in doing so. Prussia offers us the clearest European case of a successful transition to the bureaucratic alternative.[110]

To see how Prussia fit in, we need to recognize that the development of European representative assemblies was not a one-way process. If the Middle Ages were the heyday of representative assemblies, during the early modern period, assemblies in a number of countries went into decline. In France the Estates General did not meet after 1614. Some say that monarchs who considered assemblies to be inconvenient obstacles began to build bureaucracies to raise money on their own.[111] This undermined early democracy.

At the outset of the seventeenth century Prussia resembled many other European territories. There were active assemblies; there were autonomous cities; rulers were constrained to govern through consent. Within a few short decades all of this would completely change. The power of the estates in the eastern part of the realm was gravely weakened—there were no more assembly meetings, no urban autonomy, and no question of consent.[112] Prussia had embarked on a trajectory toward the bureaucratic alternative that would not end in full until the official abolition of the state of Prussia by the Allied Control Council in 1947.

The state of Prussia began life as the Electorate of Brandenburg, a relatively small territory in the Northern European Plain. From 1417, its capital was located at Berlin, and it was ruled by the Hohenzollern family. The territory of Brandenburg was initially colonized in the early medieval era by people from western Germany as well as the Low Countries, following the conquest of the local Slavic inhabitants. In this area towns soon developed, and they had a high degree of autonomy at first.[113] Over time, however, the power of the towns was eclipsed. It was the power of the nobles of the Estates of Brandenburg that would provide the most important check on the Hohenzollerns. The establishment of Prussian despotism then arose out of a struggle between the Hohenzollerns and the Estates.

Like so many European princes, the Hohenzollerns at first had no ability to rule through a bureaucracy; they instead relied on the nobles to both collect taxes and consent to them. As the territory of the Hohenzollerns expanded, they soon also relied on other Estates, including those of Prussia, Cleves, and Mark. In all cases the Estates had very substantial privileges, in keeping with the broader medieval European tradition of assembly governance.

The first great shock to the political system of Prussia came as a consequence of the Thirty Years' War, a conflict sparked by a dispute between Catholic and Protestant princes. A large part of the war was fought on Prussian soil, and the consequence was widespread destruction for the local population. In this context, the members of the various Estates resisted efforts by the Hohenzollerns to collect taxes other than those strictly necessary for local defense.[114] But by insisting to this degree on their constitutional privileges, it is possible that the Estates overplayed their hand. From 1627 onward, with much of the country occupied by foreign troops, the Elector, George William, began to use military force to extort taxes to pay for his troops. This was followed by the creation of a special war council under a count named Schwartzenberg. He and his council were wholly independent of the Estates. When the Estates protested this move, the Elector dissolved the Estates and continued to rule directly through Schwartzenberg.[115]

Two timely deaths (from the point of view of the Estates) soon led to a reestablishment of their power. On December 1, 1640, George William died, and he was replaced by his son Frederick William, who would subsequently become known as the Great Elector. Frederick William had a conflictual relationship with both his father and Schwartzenberg, and he had sought to cultivate the members of the Estates. In March 1641 Schwartzenberg himself died. Frederick William then took this as an opportunity to dissolve the war council and to return to the Estates their previous powers.[116]

The relationship between Frederick William and the Estates would not remain a friendly one. Conflict reemerged after 1655 as renewed warfare led Frederick to make demands for resources that the Estates were unwilling to assent to in full. Over the ensuing decades, the Great Elector

found ways of raising taxes through subordinates rather than with the Estates. One critical factor undermining the Estates of both Brandenburg and Prussia was that after 1660, even after the return of peace, Frederick William did not dissolve his army. The Prussian Estates had actually granted him a small subsidy for maintaining an army in peacetime.[117] If writers in the Anglo-American tradition have consistently feared the implications of a standing army for democracy, the Prussian case provides one reason for that. The presence of a peacetime army gave the Great Elector coercive power that he then used to ignore and undermine the Estates.

Frederick William also pioneered another institution that would lead to the end of early democracy in Prussia. This was the Generalkriegskommissariat, a body staffed with officials chosen by the prince that grew into a bureaucracy that could manage all affairs of both tax collection and war. By 1680 this institution had led to the complete subjugation of the Brandenburg Estates. In the Duchy of Prussia to the east, the outcome with the Estates would be similar, but the establishment of autocracy would take slightly longer. The Great Elector faced an additional obstacle with the city of Königsberg, which had long enjoyed substantial autonomy and a democratic form of political organization.

Prussia was the clearest European case of a transition from early democracy to the bureaucratic alternative. For precisely this reason, scholars have long sought to ask why Prussia took a different route. One possibility is that geography played an important role. Unlike England, Prussia during the seventeenth century experienced greater war risk on its own soil and a consequently greater need to raise revenue.[118] Also unlike the English Parliament, the Prussian Estates may have been weakened by the fact that they had less of a connection to entities of local government. It is also possible though that this was simply a contingent, or accidental, outcome. Circa 1600 Prussia had a lively system of governance through estates, and one might well think that things would have continued this way.

Rather than try to pin down the precise reason why Prussia took a different track from other European states, it might be more important for us to consider the following fact. Among European states, Prussia was the

only polity in which rulers fully succeeded in pursuing the bureaucratic alternative.

Conclusion

The fundamental factor that made for the development of representative government in Europe was the backwardness of its state bureaucracies; this left rulers with no alternative but to govern by negotiating and seeking consent from Europe's growing towns. Underlying this was a pattern of extensive agriculture and technological backwardness that weighed against the development of a strong central state bureaucracy. Governance through negotiation and consent was not a process that Europeans invented, but it was one where they innovated. They did so by developing an explicit theory of political representation that used terms from Roman law while reshaping and fundamentally redefining them. Europeans also innovated by scaling up representative systems to large polities. In this context of state weakness, even those, such as Philip the Fair, who tried to rule like autocrats generally had to govern through negotiation in the end.

6

China as the Bureaucratic Alternative

CHINA PROVIDES US WITH the starkest alternative to the western European experience in terms of political development. If Europeans developed institutions of consent long before they had strong state bureaucracies, the Chinese did the opposite. Westerners have sometimes seen China as an aberration—or to use a phrase that carries the culturalist baggage of an older era, as a case of "oriental despotism." China is instead best seen as a completely alternative path of political development. It is the most enduring case of the bureaucratic alternative, and so we should consider the evolution of the Chinese state from the earliest dynasties, the Xia and the Shang, to its final dynasty—the Qing. We can then extend the story further in chapter 11.

The Shang Establishment of Autocracy

Traditional accounts suggest that China's first two dynasties were the Xia and the Shang. The Xia would have existed from late in the third millennium BCE to the middle of the second millennium BCE. The Shang dynasty then ruled until near the end of the second millennium BCE. There is considerable debate about whether the Xia dynasty actually ever existed. For the Shang, we have firmer evidence from both archaeological remains and oracle bone inscriptions—the first system of Chinese writing. All evidence for the Xia and the Shang points to autocratic rule from a very early date.

Tradition states that the Xia dynasty was founded by Yu the Great. This is the same Yu we encountered previously as he established a system of taxation based on soil quality. We should remember that the *Tribute of Yu* text, which probably dates from the fifth century BCE, undoubtedly says more about Chinese taxation at that point in time than it does about taxation during the third millennium BCE.[1] Historical evidence for the Xia dynasty's existence is limited. Archaeologists have identified and excavated a site at Erlitou in the Yellow River Valley of northern China, but the people of Erlitou left no written records. The city had a very large palatial structure at its center and may have had a population of 18,000 to 30,000 individuals.[2] Whether Erlitou was the Xia capital is not known. What the prominence of the central palace suggests is that whoever ruled here had significant resources at their disposal.

Historical evidence for China's second dynasty, the Shang, is more firmly established, and we also have more extensive indications of how the Shang governed themselves.[3] The Shang capital was located near present-day Anyang, northeast of Erlitou and still in the Yellow River Valley. Excavations of this site show, as with the Xia, that there was an important palace structure.[4] The Shang practiced human sacrifice, leaving us with the remains of 30,000 victims distributed among 2,500 sacrificial pits.[5] Evidence of central dominance can be found from the fact that the Anyang site is forty-five times larger than the second-level settlements surrounding it.[6] The area under the influence of Anyang at its peak was very large, encompassing a significant fraction of the North China Plain, though the

area of direct control by Shang kings was smaller than this, as much of this territory would have been controlled by other groups with whom the Shang had a tributary relationship.[7]

Further evidence of autocracy comes from how Shang leaders rose to power. Shang leaders, who were known as *wang*, or "kings," inherited their position, rather than being selected. The inheritance followed a strict rule, first passing to a dead king's next eldest brother, and then, after the death of the youngest brother, to the oldest son of the oldest brother, and so on.[8] There is no indication of a selection process involving others.

The next evidence of autocracy comes from the central role the Shang kings played in divining the future and in communicating with the ancestors.[9] Oracle bones provide abundant evidence of a set of shamans who engaged in divination. According to Shang practice, inscriptions would have been made on a piece of bone or on a tortoise shell. The shell would have then been heated until it cracked. Diviners, and often the king himself, would then inspect the pattern of cracks and interpret their message. Not surprisingly, one of the most common subjects for divination was the weather. This would have been critical for an early agricultural society relying on rain-fed agriculture; millet was the principal crop for the Shang.[10] The results of divinations would be used to make decisions regarding planting and a whole host of other issues.

The oracle bones suggest that the Shang kings controlled a number of important farms, and it was these that were presumably used for the needs of the royal household and to maintain an army.[11] The Shang kings benefited extensively from reliance on conscripted labor for all that they did both in agriculture and war.[12] The oracle bone texts make references to a Shang army numbering up to 30,000 men and to laborers, known as the *zhong* ("the many") or sometimes as the *ren* ("men"). Some have suggested that the Shang kings may also have had the right to a portion of the harvest from areas other than the farms they controlled directly, but this seems to be mostly a supposition.[13]

Reliance on conscript labor reduced the need for tax collection, but it posed the question of how conscripts were controlled. The Shang oracle bones refer to a large number of titles for different officials, and this sounds like a bureaucracy, but we do not know enough to draw a firm conclusion.

Some suggest that the Shang did not have a bureaucracy at all while others refer to an "incipient bureaucracy."[14] David Keightley described the Shang state "as a thin network of pathways and encampments; the king and information and resources traveled along the pathways, but the network was laid over a hinterland that rarely saw or felt the king's presence and authority."[15]

The most important conclusion for our purposes may be that irrespective of whether they had a real bureaucracy, the Shang kings had subordinates with official titles. And there is no evidence that these subordinates were in any way equals of the king or that there was any form of assembly or council that checked his actions. In this way, the Shang set the stage for what would become China's bureaucratic alternative.

We lack any evidence of early democracy among the Shang, but we do have one piece from later records that hints at this. In China it became customary for a new dynasty to produce an official history of the dynasty that preceded it. So, the history of the Shang, or *Shang Shu*, was produced by the Zhou dynasty after the Shang dynasty's downfall. In the *Shang Shu* there is an event where a Shang king named Pan Geng wanted to move the capital to a new location. To do so he sought to persuade his people that this was the right decision. The use of persuasion suggests a degree of consultation, but it is unclear whether this episode reflects any real Shang event, because the language is different from that of other Shang texts.[16]

> Pan Geng wished to remove the capital to Yin, but the people would not go to dwell there. He therefore appealed to all the discontented and made the following protestations. "Our king came, and fixed on this. He did so from a deep concern for our people, and not because he would have them all die where they cannot now help one another to preserve their lives. I have consulted the tortoise shell and obtained the reply: 'This is no place for us.' "[17]

Was Pan Geng seeking consent from his people? Strictly speaking it was the tortoise shell that had the final say, but it certainly sounds like he is trying to convince someone of something. We know that the full text of the *Shang Shu* actually dates from much later. What we do not know is whether

this passage actually depicts a historical event. It may be better read as an attempt by someone from a later era to imagine an earlier tradition of government by consent. I will return to this idea later in the chapter.

The Zhou Dynasty and the Mandate of Heaven

On the twenty-ninth of May in the year 1059 BCE a stunning astronomical event took place. It would give birth to the idea of a "mandate of heaven" for Chinese rulers. On this date, the five planets of the solar system that are visible with the naked eye converged within a narrow area in the northwestern sky over China. According to tradition, the "five pacers" as the Chinese knew them formed a figure resembling a great scarlet crow.[18] We know from modern astronomical calculations that this quintuple planetary grouping actually did occur. We know also that there have been only four times in the last five thousand years that the "five pacers" were separated by this little distance in the sky (6.45 degrees).[19] Tradition states that the ruler of the kingdom of Zhou took this as a sign that his people, who had previously paid tribute to the Shang, should break away and establish an independent state. The Zhou kings would eventually conquer the Shang and create a new dynasty.

The astronomical event clearly made a lasting impression. It also helped lead to the development of a theory that autocratic rulers were still deemed accountable for their actions. Later Zhou discussions often downplayed the importance of celestial omens in determining whether the dynasty still had heaven's mandate—without control of the heavens, this was a risky business.[20] The better alternative was to suggest that retaining the mandate depended on how things were going on Earth. If the Zhou rulers were effectively administering their territory, then the mandate would be retained.[21] If not, then there would be unpleasant consequences of the sort that befell the Shang.

In medieval Europe we saw that the principle of *quod omnes tangit* was taken to mean that rulers should seek consent from others. This created an ex ante constraint on their rule, like in any early democracy. The thinkers of the Zhou dynasty did not take this step, but the mandate of heaven instead became a form of ex post accountability. As emperor, the decisions were up to you alone, but if things did not work out, there would be consequences. Later thinkers would extend this idea by saying that support of the people was to be taken as the sign that things were going well on Earth. This was advocated most explicitly by Mencius, the disciple and interpreter of

Confucius.[22] Some interpreters of Mencius then suggested not only that heaven's mandate depended on retaining support of the people but also that in the event things were not going well the people had a right to rebel.

China's rulers did not simply adopt the Mandate of Heaven as a justification for saying why the previous dynasty had lost its right to rule. Internal court documents show that top officials referred to the mandate as a way of instilling a simple idea: anger the people and you risk losing power. In the year 1085 CE the Song dynasty councillor Lü Gongzhu expressed this idea in the following terms:

> Although Heaven is high and far away, Heaven inspects the empire daily. Heaven responds to the deeds of the ruler. If he continuously cultivates himself and treats his people justly, then Heaven sends prosperity, and the Son of Heaven receives the realm for all times. There will be no misfortune and nobody will create trouble. If he, however, neglects the deities, ill-treats the people, and does not fear the Mandate of Heaven, there will be misfortune.[23]

Here again, we have a striking indication that within China's bureaucratic alternative, there was still some sense of accountability, but it did not involve rulers first asking people what they wanted.

Why China Took the Autocratic Route

We have seen that China took an autocratic path from a very early date, but we have not yet asked why that was the case. People have long thought that the natural environment may provide an explanation, but we will see that some of these arguments work better than others.

Early China Was Not a "Hydraulic" Society

In 1957 Karl Wittfogel published what would become a very influential, and also heavily criticized, book titled *Oriental Despotism*. He argued that societies that rely on a centralized system of providing either water (irrigation) or protection from water (flood control) tend toward autocracy. Wittfogel emphasized a functional need for central control, and many have criticized this assumption. In a great number of societies, irrigation has been managed in a decentralized manner, and as Elinor Ostrom famously argued, local communities often solve problems such as these in a self-governing manner.[24] The other big problem is that while Chinese agriculture would, over time, come to rely heavily on irrigation, the society of the Shang depended on rain-fed agriculture. Irrigation, and particularly centrally managed irrigation, would not arrive in China until considerably later. Even then, irrigation would be practiced predominantly in southern China where the most important crop was rice.

Consider the two maps in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. Each of these was produced by J. L. Buck in the 1930s based on a large survey of Chinese farms. In Figure 6.1 we see the estimated proportion of land that is cultivated. Here it is apparent that around the mouth of the Yellow River, extending westward to the great Loess Plateau, virtually all land was suitable for cultivation. This is the area where the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties emerged, and this picture alone does much to explain how a large centralized state could be established. In Figure 6.2 we see the fraction of agricultural land that was irrigated. Even as late as the 1930s, irrigation was rare in the North China Plain. In southern China, it was the predominant type of agriculture, but Chinese imperial control did not extend into

southern China until the era of the Qin and the Han. By this point, the autocratic pattern was already a millennium old.[25]

Centralized flood control could provide another reason why Shang China was a hydraulic society. Flood control was critical in the Loess plain of northern China because of the tendency of the Yellow River to frequently change course. With its fine-grained, porous structure, the loess soils surrounding the river were particularly susceptible to erosion from wind and rain. Tradition states that in addition to establishing a basis for taxation, Yu the Great also developed flood control. In the *Tribute of Yu*, he is celebrated for having dug riverbeds so that the rivers could flow to the sea without flooding the land, and Wittfogel used the example of Yu's water management in his discussion of China. Despite the appeal of the story, there are problems with his interpretation. As with irrigation, centralized flood control probably was not implemented until well after the autocratic pattern was already in place in China.

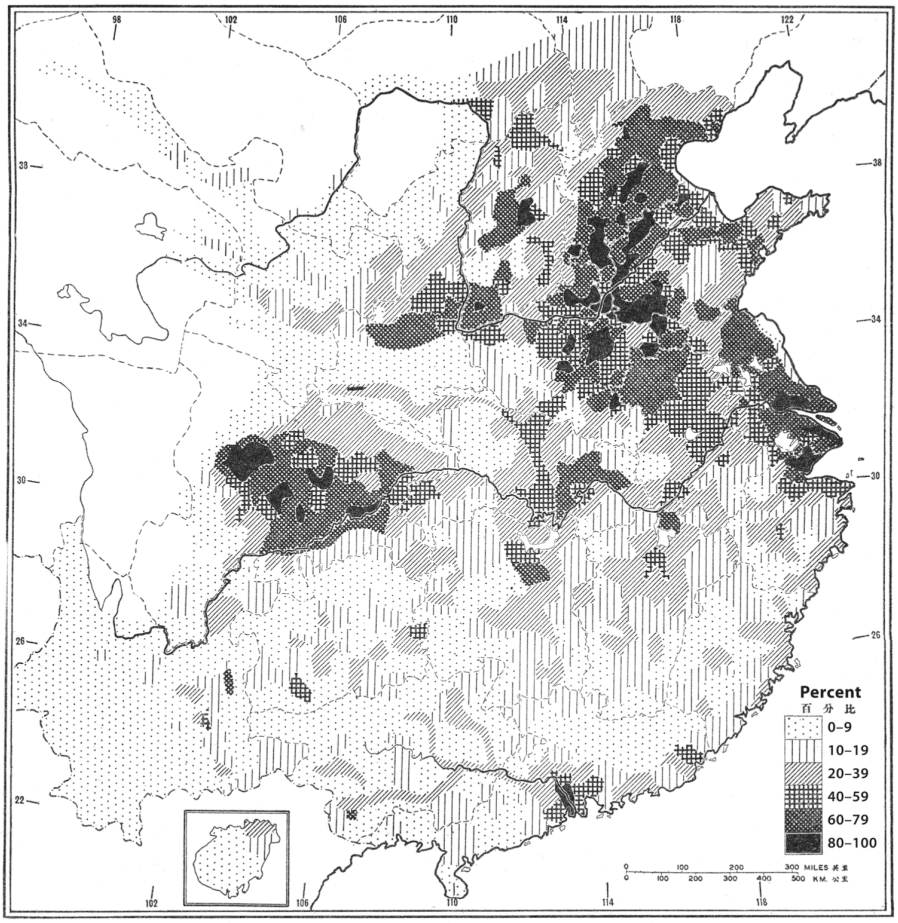


FIGURE 6.1. Percentage of total land area cultivated in China. *Source:* Buck 1937, 34.

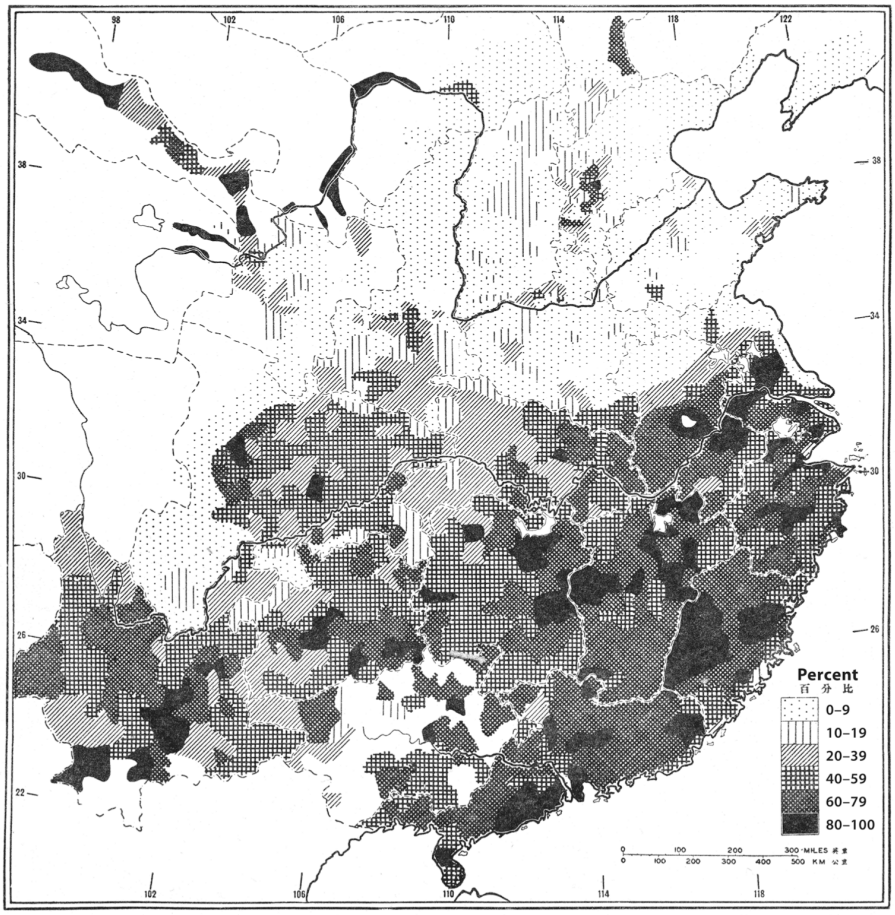


FIGURE 6.2. Percentage of cultivated land irrigated in China. *Source:* Buck 1937, 42.

High-Yield Agriculture Made a Difference

The early development of intensive, high-yield agriculture provides a better explanation for Chinese autocracy. In part this was a story of the type of soil that the Chinese found underfoot. But it was also dependent on technical innovations.

The loess soil in the area around the Yellow River was light and fine-grained and therefore easily worked with primitive tools. Loess is also porous, allowing for easy transmission of water to plants. While loess soil is fertile, on its own it is not well suited to intensive agriculture because of its low nitrogen content. Recent isotopic evidence shows that as early as 3500 BCE farmers on the Loess Plateau were compensating for this by adding manure from livestock to the soil.[26] The Loess Plateau had previously been inhabited by people from what archaeologists call the Yangshao culture (roughly 5000 BCE to 3000 BCE).[27] The primary crop they grew was

foxtail millet, and this would also provide the principal food source under the Shang.

We should also ask if early Chinese agriculture would have affected the ability of people to use an exit option if they were unhappy with those who ruled them. In the prehistoric era, farmers on the Loess Plateau, as elsewhere, used slash and burn agriculture. Existing vegetation was burned, and the nutrients released would help in growing planted crops such as millet. But under slash and burn agriculture, the resources of the land are quickly exhausted, and farmers need to move to new areas. The mobility of this system implies an exit constraint. From a very early date—perhaps around the time of the origins of the Shang—farmers on the Loess Plateau discovered that if they left a field fallow once every three years, then there was no need to move.[28] Europeans would not adopt this technique until long afterward. As the form of agriculture became more settled, it is possible that people made other adaptations in their lives that made them less able to move away.

In the end, the pattern of agriculture may explain why autocracy developed at an early date on the Loess Plateau, but we have no way of knowing this for sure. While a more settled and intensive form of agriculture may have made people less mobile, the geography of the Loess Plateau is also much different from that of the river valleys of ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia where surrounding desert limited exit options. In northern China, there was much more room for people to move around on fertile land, particularly if they moved to the south, as many would gradually do over time.[29]

One final feature of early Chinese state formation may reflect the presence of this open frontier. Absent a strong force of environmental circumscription of the sort found in ancient Egypt, early Chinese texts on statecraft place a heavy emphasis on the control of people's movements.[30] We see less of this in cases such as Sumeria and Egypt. This may be because the natural environment in China did not itself lead to "circumscription." This desire to control people would continue as the Chinese state spread southward.

Creation of a Bureaucracy

Though it did not preordain it, the early development of high-yield agriculture in China made it easier to develop a bureaucracy for the same reason this happened in Sumeria and in Egypt. Agricultural intensification transformed the land to regularize production, making this more visible to outside bureaucrats.

Though the Shang state may have had an incipient bureaucracy, we have much firmer evidence for bureaucracy's existence under the successor dynasty of the Zhou. To understand Zhou bureaucracy, we need to first consider the broad contours of the Zhou state and how it was structured. To solidify their rule, the Zhou rulers deviated from the Shang system where all power flowed from the dominant capital. They instead established a set of regional entities administered by royal kinsmen. Later historians would come to refer to this as the *fengjian* system. Historians have spent a great deal of time disagreeing over whether this system should be called "feudal." Older historians—particularly older Western historians—have tended to say yes, whereas more recent historians have tended to say no.[31] If by feudal we mean a system where the center had no real coercive or administrative power, as it was in Europe, then the comparison is inaccurate. As we will see, a Zhou bureaucracy existed within each of the regional groupings, and it also helped bind them together.

The Zhou bureaucracy consisted of several parallel administrative divisions.[32] While some of these positions had a de facto hereditary element to them, two other features are much more clearly bureaucratic: all officials served at the pleasure of the king, and there was a system for promotion. It is also clear that the Zhou bureaucracy extended down to the local level. In the western part of the kingdom bureaucrats would have been stationed in cities governing lands that were under direct royal control. The eastern part of the Zhou kingdom was organized in a different fashion. This was more of a frontier area where Zhou people established and settled in societies and governed other peoples. The people in these towns would eventually become known as the *guo ren*, whereas the people in the countryside were known as the *yeren*, which literally means the "wild people."[33]

The kings of Zhou established a new style of unified rule in China, but it was ultimately one that would last for less than three centuries. In 771 BCE, faced with threats to their rule, the Zhou kings moved their capital eastward

to a spot near present-day Luoyang. From this point on, they would be little more than figureheads. China then entered what is known as the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BCE), followed by the Warring States period (476–221 BCE). It was only after this that China would be unified again under the Qin.

A Consensual Route Not Taken

As central power under the Zhou dynasty collapsed, China entered a period where there was a struggle for power between rulers of separate states. China at this time bears some resemblance to medieval western Europe for precisely this reason. Many scholars suggest that it was the fragmented nature of the European state system—and the consequent external threats—that forced monarchs to rule through assemblies. Was it possible that the same thing could have happened in China?

Did Early Chinese Rulers Ever Rely on Assemblies?

So far, we have seen precious little evidence of consent playing a role in Chinese politics. The one exception was the story of Pan Geng, the Shang king who sought to convince his people to accept his decision to move the Shang capital. The text about Pan Geng is thought to date from the Spring and Autumn period, and it may tell us something. It is worth asking what other evidence we have from this period that might point in the same direction.

One suggestion is that the practice of seeking consent emerged as part of municipal governance in the cities that had once been part of the Zhou empire. Recall that the Zhou empire had a central capital, and in addition it had a series of regional states ruled by royal kinsmen. After 771 BCE the king's authority was gravely weakened, and these regional entities established a high degree of independence. Some have referred to the Spring and Autumn period as China's era of city-state governance.[34]

The assemblies of the *guo ren*, the elite group in these Zhou city-states, provide a clear example of rule through assembly. Though these assemblies did not become regularized in the same way that European city-state councils did, there are numerous examples of important occasions where rulers consulted with the assembled *guo ren*.[35] In 494 BCE the ruler of Chen is said to have asked a gathered assembly whether they should join with the state of Chu. People were to stand either on his right or left depending on their opinion.[36] Mark Edward Lewis, a prominent historian of early China, has identified dozens of other such instances in the records.[37]

Rulers of Zhou cities also often sought to establish blood covenants with the capital populace.[38]

Theories of Merit and Abdication

The Warring States period provides us with further fascinating evidence that as central imperial control weakened, ideas emerged that selection of those who governed should be based on merit. We know from the historical record that the Shang selected their kings through a strict inheritance rule, and the same is said to have been the case for the Xia dynasty that preceded. But Chinese tradition also refers to an even earlier set of mythical rulers known as the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors. The second to last in this series of rulers was named Yao. According to one version of the story, Yao is said to have abdicated the throne in favor of someone who was not his own heir. Rather than grant the throne to Dan Zhu, he gave it to Shun. Like the story of Pan Geng, the story of Yao and Shun must say more about political thinking at the time it was written than it does about the historical period it purports to describe.

The legend of Yao and Shun is present in classical texts that have remained known since the time they were written during the Warring States era. Sarah Allan, a noted historian of early China, has argued that in the classical texts, the version of abdication presented is a sanitized one where Yao's abdication is a one-off event not seen as a threat to the principle of hereditary rule.[39] The story is followed by that of Yu, who established the (hereditary) Xia dynasty. It was no accident that only the sanitized version survived. When he reestablished dynastic rule in 221 BCE, Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi ordered the burning of all texts that could be deemed politically subversive, and this would clearly have been one.[40]

In 1993 a very different version of the Yao and Shun story was found, thanks to the failed robbery of a tomb in Hubei province that had been sealed since the fourth century BCE. In the newly discovered version, abdication no longer appears as the exception—it is the norm. If you wanted to solidify dynastic rule and the principle of strict inheritance, then the following statement would be dangerous.

> The way of Yao and Shun was to abdicate (the rule) and not monopolize (its benefits). The kingship of Yao and Shun benefited everyone-under-heaven, yet it did not benefit them. To abdicate and not monopolize is the fullest expression of sagehood. To benefit everyone-under-heaven and not benefit oneself is the zenith of humaneness. In ancient times, men of worth, humaneness, and sageliness behaved in this manner.[41]

What led writers in the Warring States period to suddenly think of getting rid of hereditary rule? One idea, proposed by Sarah Allan, is that ideas about merit and abdication were linked to broader changes happening in Chinese society at the time. As we saw in the previous section, administration during the Zhou dynasty involved a bureaucracy, and it also involved a system of lineages. One's lineage determined one's rank and value. Burial evidence suggests that during the Warring States period, the lineage system began to lose its importance and "new men" appeared on the scene.[42] The inhabitant of the tomb where this scroll was found may have been one of these new men.[43]

The Significance of the Qin and Han Unification

After the period of political fragmentation during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States eras, a new unified imperial order emerged in China under the briefly lived Qin dynasty (221–206 BCE) and the more long-lived Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). This unification is rightly seen as a watershed. But rather than involving something entirely new, we should see the Qin and Han unification as the culmination of a process that had begun under the Shang and the Zhou nearly two millennia prior to that date.

We have seen throughout this book that early democracy is more likely to occur in small-scale settings. If during the Spring and Autumn period the *guo ren* could assemble in individual cities, in a territory as vast as Qin or Han China this was not feasible. But the Qin unification was simply the culmination of this problem of scale. The Shang and Zhou polities had already covered large territories well before the Qin. After the interlude of the Spring and Autumn period, where city-states predominated, during the Warring States period a series of new states emerged, and each of these was large enough that organizing anything resembling early democracy would have been difficult.[44]

We should also see the Qin and Han unification as a culmination of a long-term process of bureaucratic development. Since the advent of the Zhou dynasty, and maybe even before, Chinese rulers had governed through a bureaucracy. This political path was favored both by a natural environment suitable for intensive agriculture and by the development of technologies for production, observation, and control. While the central bureaucracy had crumbled during the Spring and Autumn period, during the Warring States era bureaucracies reemerged that were far more extensive than those of their predecessors.[45] The Qin and Han rulers would draw on this bureaucratic tradition.

During the Warring States period, interstate competition had prompted rulers to innovate with respect to both war technology and their ability to extract revenue. The most important development in military technology was the design of a crossbow that required little training to fire—with great accuracy—and could be mass-produced on an industrial scale.[46]

Competition between the Warring States also led to innovations in other areas. Warring States rulers developed extensive systems for the direct taxation of agriculture. They also relied on mass conscription of a sort that Europeans would not develop until the nineteenth century. This tradition would initially continue under the Han—all able-bodied men were required to perform a year of service once they reached the age of twenty-three.[47] Then, a later Han emperor abolished the practice of universal military service. In an environment where China was unified, the most dangerous external adversaries were now warriors on horses. Peasant conscripts were of little use for this kind of conflict, and they could prove dangerous at home if they knew how to use arms.[48] In western Europe the advent of mass conscription furthered the extension of political rights as a quid pro quo. The phrase that would be used, as we will see in chapter 11, was "one man, one gun, one vote." There is no Chinese equivalent to this phrase; during the Warring States period and afterward strong bureaucracies made it possible to oblige members of society to fight without offering them political rights.[49]

The result of all this was a large, unified empire with a powerful bureaucratic state. By the apogee of the Han dynasty, the imperial bureaucracy is recorded as comprising no fewer than 130,285 individuals. This figure, which is from 5 BCE, includes everyone from the highest officials down to accessory clerks.[50] Given a recorded population in 2 CE of 57.7 million, this would imply one bureaucrat for every 440 individuals —an astonishing figure for a premodern society.[51] It is also a substantially higher bureaucratic density than existed under the Roman Empire, which is estimated to have had a population similar to that of Han China.[52] Even after Diocletian, who ruled from 284 to 305 CE, doubled the size of the bureaucracy, there are thought to have been roughly thirty thousand bureaucrats in the empire.

The Imperial Examination System

The Chinese practice of recruiting bureaucrats through a civil service exam was critical for sustaining autocracy. Instead of recruiting people from great families, notables, or other local groups, the exam system allowed for a method of selection independent from society itself. Though it did not become firmly established until the time of the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties, the exam system did have earlier roots. Annals record that in 165 BCE, candidates sent to the capital were examined by Emperor Wen in person. In 130 BCE it is recorded that candidates were examined by the Grand Master of Ceremonies.[53]

The Tang dynasty saw the development of a full-fledged imperial examination system. To get a better sense of the system's importance, we can compare it to the medieval European pattern where local interests were represented in assemblies by magnates, luminaries of the church, or elites from town councils. If you were an ordinary person, then you were represented to the extent that you felt that one of these elites spoke for you, and that was certainly far from always the case.

In the Chinese system, the official role of local elites no longer applied. What happened instead is that ordinary people were "represented" by someone who scored well on an exam.[54] This system was clearly less democratic—the state now chose who would represent you. But from the perspective of an ordinary person, it is not clear you were necessarily worse off. Would it be better to be represented by a feudal baron or by a bureaucrat who was recruited through a meritocratic exam?

When Europeans first came to learn of the imperial examination system, they expressed their admiration for it.[55] This was true of Matteo Ricci, the Jesuit missionary who provided one of the earliest and most detailed European accounts of life in China.[56] In later centuries Europeans drew on the Chinese experience as they constructed meritocratic recruitment systems of their own.

There are two different views of how the imperial examination system altered the relationship between Chinese rulers and a set of leading families organized in clans.

According to the first view, this only happened at the end of the Tang dynasty as a result of other intervening factors. Some argue that before that date, clan elites had the background and resources to better equip their members to succeed on the exams; in spite of the new system, they retained their hold on power.[57] Two French sociologists, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, would say precisely the same thing about their country's examination system thirteen centuries later.[58] In the end, according to this account it was a fratricidal civil war at the dynasty's end that destroyed the old elite.[59]

The second view is that the examination system began to undermine the position of existing elites long before the end of the Tang dynasty. Using a database compiled by the Harvard-Yenching Library, several scholars have investigated the social origins of all individuals during the Tang who attained the *jinshi* rank.[60] This was the highest degree possible and a prerequisite for entry into top administrative positions. In the earliest years for which we have records, there is a very clear bias in favor of a small number of politically powerful clans. More than half of those with *jinshi* status came from one of sixty recognized clans. By the dynasty's end, this figure had dropped very substantially.[61]

Whether one subscribes to the first or the second of the two preceding views, we eventually get to the same place: the old clan elite had disappeared. Under China's subsequent dynasty, the Song, the examination system would be dominant, and this pattern continued under the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Though European states would ultimately seek to copy China's great imperial exam, the system has not been without its critics. For some later observers, the examination may have selected on merit, but it did so by using the wrong set of skills. The claim is that knowledge of the Confucian classics did not train one in management skills. However, we also know that Chinese prefectures that produced more officials of *jinshi* rank continue to have higher levels of general educational attainment even today.[62] The second criticism made of the examination system is that it channeled high-aptitude individuals into bureaucratic endeavors where they would be doing things other than innovating. This second claim is problematic as well; we

will see in chapter 8 that crucial technical innovations under the Song dynasty occurred thanks to bureaucrats.

China Also Had a Commercial Revolution

China under the Song dynasty (960–1279) had a commercial revolution every bit as significant as the one that we discussed for Europe, and one consequence was that it allowed the Song dynasty to levy revenues on a level that would not be seen in Europe until the nineteenth century.[63] In Europe we saw that the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages resulted in princely rulers having revenues on the order of 1 percent of GDP. The emperors of the Song dynasty had revenues ten times that level. So, how did this happen?

In Europe as cities grew during what is commonly called the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, princes sought to make use of them as sources of revenue. Lacking a bureaucracy with which they could do this, they raised revenue by bargaining with cities, either individually or collectively as part of assemblies. In this setting the cities levied their own taxes.

In China a bureaucratic state was already in place prior to the arrival of commercial growth. Early in the dynasty, the imperial administration established more than two thousand new tax collection centers to directly levy a sales tax of 3 percent and a transport tax of 2 percent on commercial activity in market towns.[64] This was unlike any development that happened Europe at the time, or in fact for centuries. When added to existing sources of direct taxation, these new indirect taxes on commerce allowed the Song to extract 10 percent of GDP in taxation, and sometimes even more. This was more revenue than under the preceding dynasty, the Tang, but we should also emphasize that preceding Chinese dynasties also had high extraction rates from direct taxes on production.[65]

The other striking feature of the Song state was the number of high-level officials. In the year 1041 CE there were about 10,000 “capital and court officials” in the Song state. This designation refers to the upper ranks of Song officialdom. It excludes lower-level officials, such as clerks, as well as military officials of any sort.[66] We lack a more complete register of Song officials of the kind we have for the Han that would include numbers of lower-level functionaries. By the dynasty’s end the number of capital and court officials had risen to 17,000.[67] In order to get a sense of how

important this number was, we do need to adjust it for the size of the Chinese population relative to that of whichever western European country we choose to compare it with. If we start with the figure of 10,000 officials total at the beginning of the Song dynasty, we can compare this with an estimated population of 40 million people.[68] So that would imply one high-level official for every four thousand individuals. A first comparison might be with the Carolingian Empire. We can know neither the number of *missi dominici* nor the total population with any certainty. Even so, it is still clear that the Carolingian proto-bureaucracy was vastly thinner than the Chinese one. If one uses the figure of 100 *missi dominici* at any one time—and this seems like an upper bound—there might have been only one high-level official for every hundred thousand individuals.[69]

We can also compare the Chinese bureaucracy with the later regimes of Edward I in England and Philip the Fair in France. Here the difference between China and Europe is not as staggering as during the Carolingian era, but it is still very large. England in 1300 had a population of about 4 million, so about one-tenth that of China, and France had a population of 16 million, so a little bit less than half of China. To have the same density of officials England would have needed to have had 1,000 high-level officials in the equivalent of the "capital and court" category. The actual numbers were significantly lower. As late as the fifteenth century, there were only forty salaried bureaucrats in the English Exchequer at Westminster, and though this was not the sum total of top English officialdom, it is a good indication of how thin the English state really was. In France the situation was similar as "the financial apparatus of the monarchy lay in the hands of perhaps twenty or so men in the time of Philip the Fair."[70]

As we contemplate the power of the Song state, we need to also recognize that Song emperors were not the "oriental despots" that an earlier generation of Western writers conceived of them as. The emperor was indeed the supreme authority of the state, and he retained the power to replace all officials at will. This is why the Song dynasty is distinguished from early democracy where rulers govern jointly with members of society. But as soon as we say this, we need to also emphasize that the power of emperors was not completely untrammeled. The upper officialdom of the Song operated on a strong principle of consensus, complemented by

specific bureaucratic procedures. There was also an idea of "harmony" (*tiao ho*) in decision making that cut two ways: decisions would not be made without consensus, but once consensus emerged, all would support it.[71]

Mongol Conquerors Abandoned Their Assembly Tradition

Though the Song dynasty was a time of prosperity and economic dynamism, its rulers eventually succumbed to Mongol invaders led by Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis. Kublai declared the establishment of the new dynasty, the Yuan, in 1271 CE, and the dynasty became effective in 1279. The Mongol conquest provides another example of a phenomenon we have seen before: inheriting a bureaucracy can shift a society toward autocracy.

I am not going to claim here that Genghis Khan was a great democrat; what I will argue is that like many nomadic peoples, Mongol leaders found themselves needing to govern by some form of consent. Their society made any other way of doing things impossible—those who were not content with a Mongol chief could decamp and move elsewhere.[72] At the same time, if nomads were not simply to survive by stealing mobile wealth from each other, then they needed to find a way to extract wealth from more settled societies, and some have argued that this necessitated a central political organization.[73]

There was no strict inheritance rule for leaders in Mongol society; the sense was instead that the best heir should get the job. The assembly in which this decision occurred was known as a *kurultay*, and this word still means "assembly" in Turkish today. A *kurultay* took place in order to elect new leaders as well as to discuss important policy matters, such as going to war. Genghis Khan himself was chosen in a *kurultay* in 1206 CE.[74] An assembly of this sort took place under a certain threat because a succession not settled peacefully would result in open warfare.

Kublai Khan became a leader in a *kurultay* held in 1260, although it was one that contested the result of a prior *kurultay* held by his younger brother. Once he conquered China, Kublai Khan was in the unique position of being both the Great Khan of the Mongols and the emperor of China. A traditional Mongol Khan could command potent military force, but the ability to direct it depended on persuasive power and allegiance. With the conquest of China, Kublai had inherited a bureaucracy.[75] Kublai Khan's successor was declared during a *kurultay* following his death, but in this case, it was his anointed successor, following the Chinese model.[76] From

that point on the succession would continue to occur without any pretense of holding an assembly.

The Ming Restoration

So far in this chapter I have emphasized the strength of the Chinese bureaucratic state relative to contemporaneous states in western Europe. Eventually this situation flipped; European states began to extract more and more revenue while the Chinese state followed the opposite course. Some think this was a consequence of the absence of institutions of early democracy in China, but we should remember here that the Song and dynasties preceding it had raised very high amounts of revenue while ruling purely as autocrats.[77] The curious feature of the Chinese decline in revenues is that it was in no small part a deliberate effort by successive Ming and Qing emperors to tax society more lightly. It was as if the Chinese state disarmed itself.

The arrival of the Ming dynasty in 1368 ushered in an important restoration in two ways. The first, and most obvious, way was that outside rule by the Mongols had come to an end. But there was also a second restoration under the Ming, and this was to prove to be a lasting one. The founder of the dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang—or the Hongwu emperor under his official title—departed from Song dynasty precedent by focusing less on commercial development. Perhaps as a consequence of this, per capita growth of income was substantially lower under the Ming than under the Song.[78] If the Song dynasty had seen a commercial revolution that was actively promoted by the state, the early Ming emperors returned to a vision from an earlier time—a society composed of small, economically independent agricultural communities.[79]

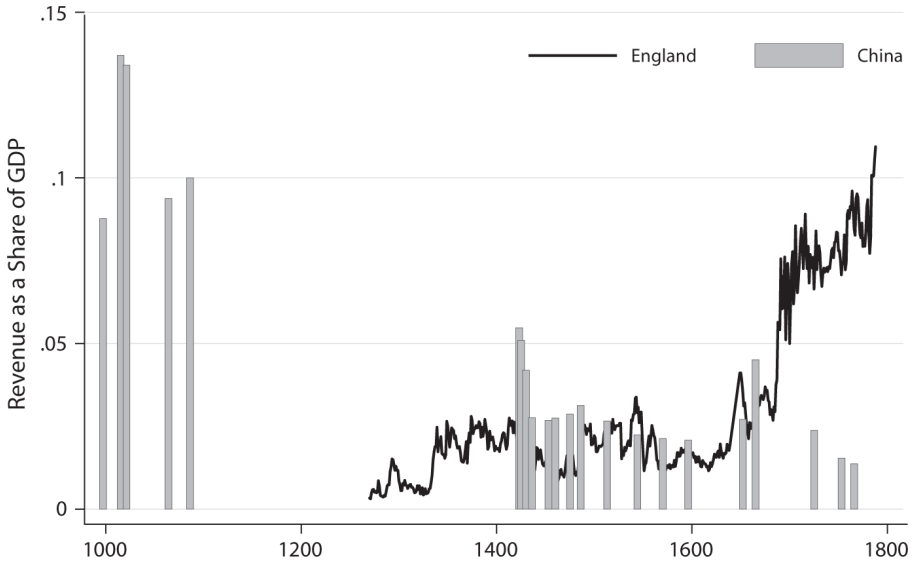


FIGURE 6.3. State revenues in China and England. Chinese revenue figures collected by Guo (2019). GDP estimates are from Broadberry et al. 2018. The English revenue data are from the Bank of England's "A Millennium of Macroeconomic Data for the UK" data set.

The Hongwu emperor also initiated a policy of collecting substantially less revenue than had been the case under the Song. This was the beginning of a long downward trend in state capacity. Figure 6.3 tells the story, with trends in English revenue collection offered here as a comparison. If central state revenues under the Song had peaked at more than 10 percent of GDP, the Ming emperors never raised more than about half that amount. This was in part a deliberate consequence of government policy. While the Song relied heavily on indirect taxes on commercial transactions, the Ming, as had previous dynasties, relied predominantly on direct taxation of agricultural production. Some suggest that the guiding principle behind all this was the return to a more traditional Chinese view of a simple agrarian society with light taxation by the state.[80]

Initially, the amount that the Ming raised through this form of taxation was still very high by European standards. Records from 1423 show that the Ming government raised about 5.5 percent of GDP in revenues. In the same year King Henry VI of England raised less than a third of that amount.[81] But the difference would not stay that great for very long. In the latter years of the dynasty, which ended in 1644, Ming emperors were extracting only 2 percent of GDP in revenue. This was not only a far lower level of revenue extraction than had existed under the Song, it was also most certainly

significantly lower than had been tax levels under prior dynasties like the Han and the Tang.

There may be many reasons why revenues declined under the Ming dynasty, but two stand out in particular.[82] The first involved the institutional design of the Ming bureaucracy. The Hongwu emperor engaged in an effort to centralize as much power as possible under his own direct control, raising the risk that in such a large empire this would prove inefficient. In order to guard against potential threats to his rule, between 1376 and 1396 he also executed a great number of senior officials. The effect of this, one historian suggests, was to reduce the imperial bureaucracy to "a huge clerical pool."[83]

The second explanation for the decline in revenues was the lack of extensive external or internal threats to Ming rule. This allowed the Ming to survive in spite of its weakened administration. Unlike the dynasties that preceded it, or western European states at the time, the Ming did not face the sort of existential threat that made it necessary to raise as much revenue as possible given the economic resources of the territory and the existing institutions of fiscal administration. For Ming emperors a substantial decline in revenues was not a death sentence.

It is true that Ming emperors still faced security threats. A simple comparison of war frequency between 1500 and 1799 shows that China experienced conflict 56 percent of the time while France and England experienced conflict 52 and 53 percent of the time, respectively.[84] What was different about the Ming was the nature of the external threats. European states at this time were embroiled in large-scale wars with other major powers that were becoming increasingly expensive. This was due in part to a simple increase in scale but also to the introduction of expensive new technologies involving fortifications and artillery. In this environment there was a great incentive to expand tax capacity. In China this was less the case. Instead of involving large conflicts with other powers, the primary concerns involved either border wars with small nomadic groups or domestic rebellions.[85] Also, external threats came from a single northerly direction.[86] Under the Ming, China's northern frontier was secured on the cheap by resettling criminals and landless people on a set of military farms that were supposed to be self-sustaining.[87] The nature of external threats

faced allowed the government of the Ming to survive for a lengthy period of time (276 years) in spite of its weakened extractive capacity.

The Qing

In much scholarly work, the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) gets a bad press; it is seen as substantially weaker than earlier dynasties. There is some truth to this: the amount of revenue the Qing dynasty extracted from Chinese society was considerably less than that of any of its predecessors. During the eighteenth century, the Qing extracted about 2 percent of GDP in revenue each year, and during the nineteenth century this figure would fall to 1 percent or less. As with the Ming, however, we will see that the weakness of the Qing state was not simply a product of absolutism or bureaucratic inefficiency—it was also a deliberate choice.

Consider the following episode. In the year 1712, the Kangxi emperor conducted an empire-wide cadastral survey for land tax assessments, and he then declared that the resources revealed by this survey provided a sufficient basis for revenues. There would be no further efforts at assessment to take account of rising agricultural productivity, and so, no further cadastral survey was conducted by the Qing. As part of this, land tax rates were frozen at 1711 levels.[88] This was not a case like the Domesday Book where the Normans lacked the capacity to pull the trick off more than once; Chinese imperial bureaucrats had been conducting surveys of this sort for a very long time. It is as if a high-capacity state had simply decided to surrender this advantage with respect to society. Though the Kangxi emperor certainly did not see it this way, one historian has referred to this as "one of the most unfortunate economic and political acts of the first century of Qing rule."[89]

There was also an unintentional reason for the decline in revenues under the Qing, and this involved the effect of geographic scale. Chinese dynasties had always occupied very large swaths of territory, so a simple reference to size alone is inadequate here. But the Qing empire at its greatest extent controlled twice as much territory as had the Ming, which in turn controlled more of China than had the Song. With less knowledge of newly controlled areas, the Qing taxed them even more lightly than core provinces close to Beijing.[90]

The impression one has of the Qing is of an implicit deal centered on the idea of a remote state. The central state might not do much for its

agricultural producers, but nor would it ask much of them. Another way to think of this was that this was "limited government" of a form different than that which emerged in Great Britain after the Glorious Revolution.[91] There a representative assembly with a long tradition of collective action gained control of a bureaucracy created by prior Tudor monarchs. In China no such tradition of consensual government existed. To establish a form of limited government the Qing instead chose to not invest in state capacity. By not undertaking further cadastral surveys after 1713, the dynasty effectively committed to not taxing new production attributable to advances in overall agricultural productivity or to a growing population. In the short run this kept internal peace. In the long run, it left the Qing state vulnerable to internal rebellions and external threats.

If the first hundred and fifty years of the Qing dynasty was an era of relative peace, during the nineteenth century China suffered two large shocks. The first was an internal one brought about by population growth that was not matched by a rise in agricultural productivity. Economic historians have offered many different interpretations of why this happened, and there is also considerable dispute over just how rich (or poor) China was at this time. Even so, there is broad agreement that the rural Chinese population was under heavy strain.[92] The second shock involved foreign incursion, and in particular a forcible opening to external trade on terms dictated by Britain after the Opium War of 1839–42. This further destabilized Chinese society.

The initial political consequences of economic depression were felt in 1796 with the White Lotus Rebellion that took place in highland areas of Hubei and Shaanxi provinces that had recently been brought under cultivation. Those who rebelled sought their motivation in an apocalyptic version of Buddhism—dubbed the White Lotus Teachings by the authorities—that spoke of an Eternal Mother without Birth (Wusheng Laomu), who superseded the Maitreya Buddha as the source of salvation.[93]

In the areas where the White Lotus Rebellion took place, overexploitation of the soil resulted in impoverishment of the local population. When combined with extortionate surtaxes levied by local functionaries, this led to a massive rebellion. It was only after using all remaining funds in the imperial treasury that the Qing were able to pacify

the area.[94] Gravely weakened, the dynasty came near to being overthrown by the rebels of the Taiping Rebellion of 1850 to 1864, and in this case the rebels referred not to Buddhism but instead to apocalyptic ideas derived from Christianity. Having someone in Imperial China running around the countryside claiming to be the brother of Jesus was profoundly subversive.[95] Faced with such grave threats, after the Taiping the Qing authorities did attempt to raise new revenues, but rather than this occurring through central collection of new land tax revenues, the efforts involved ad hoc exactions by local and provincial officials.[96] This led to a further fragmentation of the regime.

Conclusion

China presents the clearest alternative to the path of political development taken by western Europe. In Europe a bureaucratic state arrived very late in the game, long after practices of early democracy had become firmly anchored. In China a bureaucratic order arrived at a very early date, and apart from interludes like the Spring and Autumn period, it persisted. It did so in spite of outside invasion, and successful outside conquerors simply co-opted the bureaucracy rather than dismantling it. It would be wrong to argue that the natural environment was determinant in leading to this outcome, but it did prove influential. The conditions of the Loess Plateau favored the early development of a high-yield, intensive agriculture in a way that western European conditions did not. But it would be wrong to argue that geography was determinant here because the development of a Chinese bureaucratic state also depended on the fact that the Chinese were ahead of western Europeans when it came to technologies for production and measurement. Ultimately, the Chinese imperial state fell in no small part because a series of emperors chose to dismantle part of the state capacity that they started out with. This worked well in an early era of weak outside threats but not later. In chapter 11 we will continue the story of the Qing dynasty's fall and belated efforts to turn to assembly governance.

7

How Democracy Disappeared in the Islamic World

MANY PEOPLE ASK whether Islam and democracy can ever be compatible, and when they do so they often proceed from the simple observation that modern democracy has a very weak track record in the Middle East. In this chapter I will explore the deep roots of governance in this region. We will see that early democracy was actually the norm in pre-Islamic Arabia and that it continued for a time after the Islamic conquests. It was embodied in the Koranic principle of *shura*—the idea that rulers should be collectively selected and should consult those they governed. We will see finally that these practices died out under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates but for reasons that had little to do with religious doctrine. Umayyad and Abbasid rulers inherited a state bureaucracy, and this allowed them to pursue the autocratic alternative.

Early Democracy before Islam

Though historical sources on pre-Islamic Arabia are sparse, what we do know points to a pattern we have already seen in other thinly settled regions with mobile populations. Groups of people had a single ruler, but the ruler was to some degree selected rather than being purely hereditary. It was also the norm for rulers to govern through consultation.

Central Arabia during the pre-Islamic period was an area populated by Bedouin tribes who lived a nomadic or semi-nomadic existence. There were also some town dwellers in places such as Mecca and Medina. Towns tended to be located where either a substantial oasis allowed for agriculture to be practiced or an important trade route existed. For both nomadic and settled populations, society was organized along tribal lines based on patrilineal descent.

The political practices of Bedouin tribes in the recent past provide insights into how these pre-Islamic Bedouins governed themselves. In recent times tribes have been governed by someone known as a *sayyid* or a *shaykh*. In literal translation *shaykh* simply means "old man."[1] The *sayyid* has to be recognized by others as part of a selection process, and he needs to rule in a consensual manner.[2] We know today that some Bedouin tribes even reject the idea of having a single leader. The Sa, who inhabit the mountains of southern Jordan, claim, "We have no *shaykhs* or we are all *shaykhs*."[3]

The frequent use of oaths or pacts of mutual support provides further evidence of non-hierarchical governance. This resembles the Italian and northern European communes that were also founded by sworn oaths. Herodotus described how one such pact of mutual support was sealed among pastoral nomads.

> The Arabians, who regard pledges made to their fellow men with special reverence, enter into a pledge in this way. Between the two men who wish to make the pledge stands another man, who cuts the palm of each along the thumb with a sharp stone. Then, taking a small strip of cloth from the cloak of each man, he daubs seven stones that have been set up

between them with their blood, and as he does so he invokes Dionysos and Ourania.[4]

The pact described above represented a way for tribal groups to provide for their security in the absence of a coercive state that could act as a third party. It was generally a *sayyid* who brokered a pact to establish peace between individuals who were not blood relatives. There is also evidence of pacts taking place in the towns of pre-Islamic Arabia. In Mecca these pacts are said to have been cemented with special handshakes or handclasps.[5]

When we consider the Arabian history of mutual assistance pacts, including within towns, we can better understand the background to the early Islamic document commonly known as the *Constitution of Medina*. Though the two earliest versions of this text date from significantly later, they are believed by scholars to represent a historical event.[6] The *Constitution of Medina* describes an arrangement laid out by Muhammad for managing the coexistence of different tribal groups, both Muslim and non-Muslim, within the city of Medina. In keeping with political arrangements in the pre-Islamic era, there is nothing in the pact that suggests a pattern of hierarchical authority (excepting of course to God), nor is there discussion of coercive state power. This means that the arrival of Islam failed to provoke any immediate shift toward hierarchy and autocracy.

Though *sayyids* in pre-Islamic Arabia ruled as first among equals, there were instances where they succeeded in constructing hierarchical authority. The northern and southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula were more suitable both to agriculture and to outside influence by foreign powers. In the centuries prior to the birth of Islam, the Roman Empire was locked in a struggle for regional power with the Sasanian Empire based on present-day Iran and Iraq. As part of this struggle, these two great powers sought to use their resources to cultivate regional clients in Arabia. Thanks to this support, some *sayyids* succeeded in transforming themselves into *maliks*, or kings. This was the case of the Jafnids, a Byzantine client state, and the Nasrids, who were supported by the Sasanians.[7]

Shura as a Principle of Consultation

The existence in the Koran of the principle of *shura* shows that ideas about consensual governance did not disappear the day that Islam arrived.[8] The term appears first in the Koran when a ruler is urged, "So pardon them, and ask forgiveness for them, and consult them in the conduct of affairs. And when you make a decision, put your trust in Allah."[9] Reference to *shura* appears a second time with regard to those who "conduct their affairs by mutual consultation."[10] In some texts, this same principle of consultation is referred to as *mashwara*.[11]

Were the two above references all that we hear of the concept of *shura*, we would probably not want to make much of the matter. In fact, the idea of *shura* was at the heart of debates about early Islamic governance. It could refer either to an existing leader ruling through consultation or to the process of consultation to select a new leader.[12] According to one tradition, after a group selected Abu Bakr as the first caliph upon Muhammad's death, he reassured those who had opposed him that he would govern according to *shura* principles. The most prominently discussed example of a caliph being selected through *shura* is that of Uthman, who was the third of the first four "righteous" caliphs. According to Sunni doctrine, all four of the first righteous caliphs were chosen according to the *shura* principle. According to Shiite doctrine, the first three of these four were usurpers.

Each of the four above episodes is based on statements by later commentators, and these people often had a political ax to grind.[13] But whether the story of *shura* is historically accurate matters less than does the simple fact that some people clearly wanted to tell the story this way. There is a direct parallel between the way seventeenth-century British opponents of Stuart autocracy referred to an "ancient constitution" inherited from the Anglo-Saxons and the way opponents of Umayyad rule referred back to an era of consultative rule according to *shura* principles.[14] In each case there was an attempt to use history to say that tradition suggested other ways of governing.

The Umayyad Shift to Dynastic Rule

As the Arab conquests spread around the Mediterranean, the initial way they were organized replicated the consensual structure of governance in Arabia. Armies that conquered non-Muslim peoples set up and lived in garrison cities, and soldiers in these cities were paid rather than being conscripted. The revenues to maintain armies came from subject populations, and they were collected locally. This meant that caliphs in Medina (and subsequently Damascus) had little direct control and needed to rule consensually. One Byzantine chronicler named Theophanes referred to the first Umayyad caliph as "first councilor."[15]

The consensual pattern of governance disappeared when Muawiyah, the first Umayyad caliph, designated his son, Yazid, as his successor. From this point on, heredity was the stated rule, and the significance of this shift was not lost on contemporary observers. Critics of the Umayyads made repeated calls for a return to *shura*. Some of these calls came from outside critics and others from self-interested insiders. Irrespective of the motivation, people hoped that they would resonate. Patricia Crone documented no less than thirteen episodes during the Umayyad period where prominent individuals called for a *shura* council to be held to select leaders.[16]

By the Abbasid period, which began in 750 CE and saw the capital moved to Baghdad, calls for *shura* grew fewer and farther between, as if there was grudging acceptance that dynastic inheritance was inevitable. As one chronicle remarked,

> By God, our booty, which was shared, has become a perquisite of the rich; our leadership, which was consultative, has become arbitrary; our succession, which was by the choice of the community, is now by inheritance.[17]

Inheriting a State

Inheriting existing bureaucracies in the eastern end of the Mediterranean allowed the caliphs to shift to autocratic rule. Prior to the Islamic conquests, to the north and east of Arabia, the Sasanian Empire had controlled Iran, Iraq, and part of the Levant since the third century CE. The Sasanians were in constant conflict with Rome and then Byzantium. To finance their armies the Sasanians relied on taxes on agricultural production collected from a fertile region in what is now southern Iraq. Arab conquerors would refer to this area as the Sawad—the "Black Land"—that had a fertile dark soil that contrasted with the white sand of the Arabian desert.[18] The Sawad was the same region in which the Third Dynasty of Ur established an autocratic state at the end of the third millennium BCE.

Prior to the fifth century, Sasanian monarchs governed areas like the Sawad through indirect rule. Lacking a bureaucracy to assess taxes, they instead relied on local elites. In parallel with this, local hereditary nobility had a very substantial degree of autonomy, acknowledging nominal allegiance to Sasanian monarchs but not much more. The high nobility of the empire sat on a council of the king that managed the succession process.[19] Sasanian kings did directly appoint a set of regional governors, one for each province of the empire, but in this early phase the governors had little power.

Things changed drastically with the two long reigns of Kawad (488–531 CE) and Khusrau (531–579). In the 520s, following the suppression of a violent uprising, Kawad and Khusrau (his son) implemented a series of centralizing reforms. They divided the empire into four parts, each oriented toward a point of the compass, and each quarter was divided into districts that themselves had subdistricts, all administered by royal officials who directly collected taxes. Tax reforms included creation of a land registry, as well as a census, creation of a land tax, and finally a poll tax. New authorities had policing and enforcement capabilities, and the position of the high nobility suffered.[20]

The Sasanian system for levying taxes was strikingly sophisticated. They levied the land tax at a rate ranging from one-half to one-tenth of a crop depending on whether the land was irrigated, how intensively it was

cultivated, and how distant it lay from the nearest market. This was later replaced by an even more sophisticated system where bureaucrats surveyed the land, and tax rates were set dependent on the type of crop, the presence and type of irrigation, and the anticipated level of productivity.[21]

Sasanian monarchs also carried out a number of important engineering reforms that raised agricultural productivity. They did this through the construction of canals as well as underground water channels known as *qanats*.[22] Under Kawad the Sasanians also attempted to concentrate and resettle populations close to irrigation works that offered the highest agricultural productivity.

The consequence of the Sasanian reforms was that when Islamic armies conquered Iraq, they suddenly found themselves in possession of rich irrigated agricultural land that produced high yields. This land had been extensively surveyed, and there existed a class of bureaucrats with the training and ability to manage the tax system.[23] Historians have debated just how heavily the Islamic Caliphate borrowed from the Sasanians, and there were certainly new tax innovations introduced after the conquest. But compare this to Gaul under the Merovingians: there conquerors inherited much land but no bureaucracy or cadastral register, and the type of rain-fed agricultural production made it difficult to construct a new one.

Though the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs inherited both a bureaucracy and a sophisticated irrigation system, over time they failed to maintain the latter.[24] Irrigating soil runs the risk of raising its salt content to a point where agricultural yields decline; to avoid this one needs adequate drainage. This in turn requires continual investments, and Abbasid caliphs failed to make these, perhaps because they were so frequently involved in succession struggles that necessitated diverting funds to their armies. Over time, the consequence of all this was a severe decline in revenues. By 918 CE revenues from the Sawad were in nominal terms only about a third of what they had been a century before.[25]

The Circle of Justice

We began this chapter by reviewing the non-hierarchical character of governance in pre-Islamic Arabia. Low population density, mobile populations, and the lack of any coercive apparatus all weighed against any alternative outcome. From this environment, Muslims inherited and enshrined ideas about consensual governance in the form of *shura* and *mashwara*. Though they are enshrined in the Koran, caliphs abandoned these democratic principles to rule as autocrats. However, as we saw with the Chinese empire, autocratic rule did not also imply abandoning any idea of accountability. In addition to their bureaucracy, the Islamic caliphs also borrowed a legitimating ideology from the Sasanians: the Circle of Justice. One description of this concept runs as follows.[26]

> There is no authority without men
> and there are no men without money
> and there is no money without cultivation
> and there is no cultivation without justice and good governance

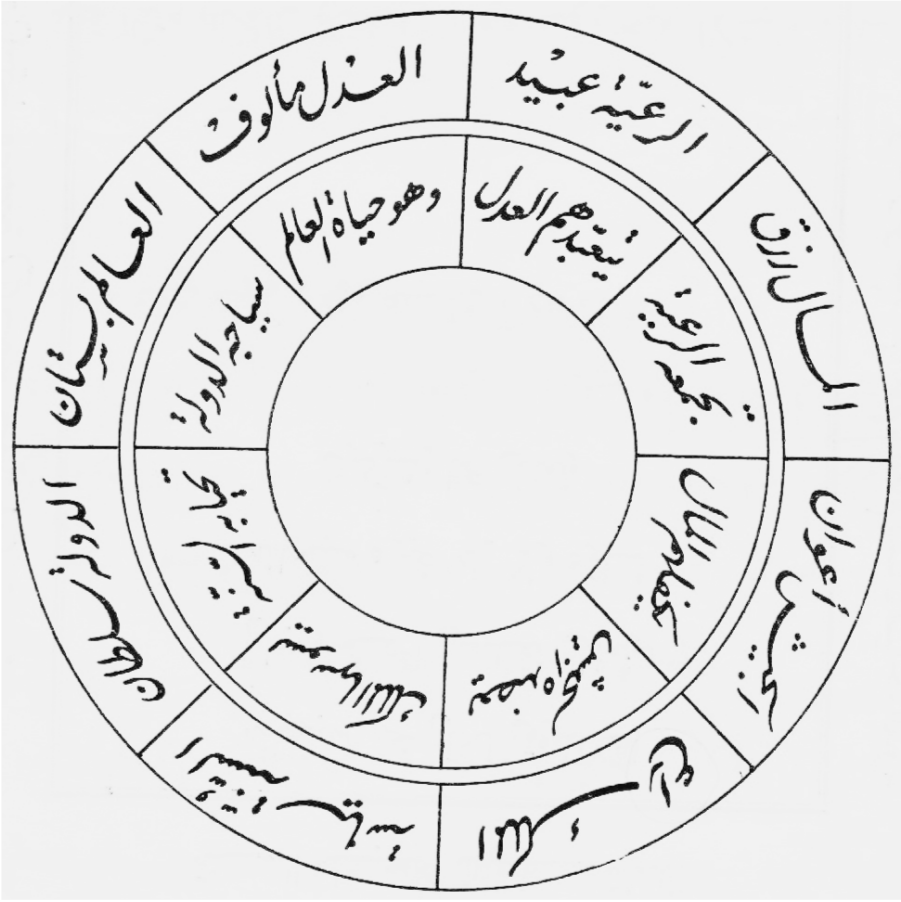


FIGURE 7.1. The Circle of Justice. *Source:* London 2011.

A surprising feature of the Circle of Justice is that descriptions of it often refer explicitly to tax collectors—they are seen as an essential part of a peaceful and prosperous order. The Circle of Justice celebrated the direct role played by the bureaucratic state in maintaining social harmony. For medieval Europeans—who started with the belief that "the king must live of his own"—this would have sounded like a very strange idea indeed.

The Byzantine Inheritance

The Islamic conquest of Iraq illustrates how inheriting a state bureaucracy can tilt governance in a more autocratic direction. But we should be careful before concluding that this development on its own set the Muslim world on an inevitable path toward autocracy. After 945 CE, Abbasid caliphs continued to rule from Baghdad, but they had lost control of their provinces. So, we need to ask what was happening in these provinces and what form governance took.

When Islamic armies conquered Egypt, they encountered a situation similar to what they had found in Iraq, but in this case the state they inherited was of Roman and Byzantine origin. Egypt fell under the outside control of Rome in 31 BCE. Prior to that date it had been part of the Persian Empire, and then Alexander the Great conquered it. From this point on, Egypt remained under Roman, and subsequently Byzantine, control apart from a very brief episode under the Sasanians just prior to the Islamic conquests.

We saw previously that the physical environment of ancient Egypt lent itself to a centralized and autocratic form of rule. For those unhappy with life in the densely populated Nile Valley, there was no exit option. Easy measurement of the Nile flood, facilitated by the invention of the nilometer, helped make yields more predictable. This made a centralized tax administration feasible.

Under Rome the province of Aegyptus served as an important source of both grain and tax revenue.[27] Diocletian, who reigned from 284 to 305 CE, divided Egypt into several districts whose officials were responsible to a prefect based in Alexandria. When control of Egypt passed to the eastern Roman emperors based in Constantinople, the role of Alexandria diminished.

Within Egypt there was initially a set of city councils that directly participated in the collection of taxes. Outsiders administered these councils at first, so they were not really an example of early democracy, but from the fourth century onward local people took over the councils only to see them diminish in importance. Tax administration instead involved a new class of

large landholders who would represent the principal local power at the time of the Muslim conquest.[28]

When Muslim armies conquered Egypt, they encountered an environment analogous to that which they found in Iraq. Egypt had been ruled by a long series of powers, but none of these outside incursions led to the dismantlement of the existing bureaucratic state. The response of the conquerors was to replace those people at the top of the administrative apparatus while continuing to rely on the same local-level officials as had the Byzantines. These large landowners were referred to as the *duces*. For administration they also continued to use Greek as well as Coptic, albeit with the addition of Arabic technical terms.[29] This was not a system of indirect rule because the *duces* were closely supervised by Arab officials known as *amirs*.[30]

Al-Andalus

In their spread around the Mediterranean, Muslim armies reached the Strait of Gibraltar within a few short decades of Muhammad's death. From there they conquered much of what is now Spain and Portugal, a territory that they would refer to as al-Andalus. This territory was at first ruled by governors sent from Damascus. After the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate in 750 CE, Muslims in al-Andalus created an independent emirate—subsequently called a caliphate of their own—that lasted until the beginning of the eleventh century. After that point, a set of smaller Muslim and Christian kingdoms vied for control of the Iberian Peninsula until the eventual conquest of Granada, the last Muslim state on the peninsula, in the year 1492.[31]

Events in Iberia after the fall of Rome allow us to examine how very different types of governance existed prior to, during, and following the end of Muslim rule.

In the first of the above three phases—the one after the fall of the Roman Empire in the West—the Visigoths controlled much of Iberia. This was the same group, led by Alaric, that had sacked Rome in 410 CE. Scholars have emphasized that Visigoth kings were elected. While technically true, by the century before the Muslim conquest, almost all successions involved passing the throne from one relative to another, and in some cases the outgoing monarch designated the successor.[32] Better evidence of early democracy among the Visigoths comes from the frequency with which bishops and others in the kingdom held councils.[33]

The second phase of post-Roman governance on the Iberian Peninsula arrived when Muslim armies completed their conquest of the Visigoths in the year 711. In its place they established a system of autocratic and bureaucratic governance much like what they had created in other regions.

In the third and final phase of Iberian governance, a series of kingdoms with Christian monarchs expanded, consolidated, and finally recaptured the entirety of the Iberian Peninsula. These Iberian societies developed and maintained a very important parliamentary tradition, as we saw in chapter 5. Early democracy had returned.

The key question we need to ask is why Christian kingdoms in Iberia governed through assemblies whereas Muslim rulers did not.

To start with, we should consider the Roman background. Taxation in the Roman province of Hispania operated along the same lines we saw in other provinces of the western empire. There was substantial reliance on local elites as intermediaries, but the empire retained significant coercive capacity. As elsewhere in the West, with the fall of Rome any semblance of central bureaucratic control disappeared. The post-Roman background helps explain why Visigothic monarchs had to rule in an early democratic fashion. Lacking a central bureaucracy, kings needed to use their councils of bishops for help in raising revenue.[34]

After the fall of the Visigoths, the Muslim invaders brought with them an Umayyad tradition of rule without elections and without consent. At first a caliph in Damascus ruled al-Andalus through an appointed governor. After the split from the rest of the empire, individuals calling themselves the caliphs of al-Andalus ruled Iberia from the city of Cordoba.

It is very unlikely that new ideas alone led to this change in the style of rule in Iberia. The Islamic conquerors also brought with them several things that helped cement autocratic rule. In the year 718 the caliph in Damascus sent a new governor, a large military force, and trained bureaucrats to solidify administration and assess land for the purposes of taxation.[35] In other words, they imported a state.

It is unclear how quickly the rulers of al-Andalus resorted to direct taxation of agriculture. Initially, they funded their operations by levying a poll tax collected by Christian bishops using parish registers. They also collected a tax from the Muslim population that could be used to gain exemption from military service. Either of these two taxes would have still depended on agricultural production to the extent that those who paid them grew crops that they sold. Eventually there was direct taxation of agriculture, implemented on a progressive scale.[36] A literate and effective bureaucracy administered this system in a way that surpassed that of any other kingdom in western Europe at the time.

There is also another way in which the advance of civilization may have reinforced the caliphate. As we will discuss more extensively in the next chapter, the Islamic world during this period experienced something of a

Green Revolution, with the introduction of new crops shared from far parts of the empire. Accompanying this, the caliphate invested heavily in irrigation works in the Guadalquivir Valley where the city of Cordoba is located.[37]

So why did the Iberian Peninsula's Muslim society eventually lose out to the Christian kingdoms that established themselves to its north? From the description I have given, it seems like the caliphate based in Cordoba had a lot going for it. It had a bureaucracy, a standing army, and a stable basis of direct taxation. These are things that other European states would not have for half a millennium or more. And this is not even to mention the advances in learning and culture that so many have emphasized as being an integral part of al-Andalus.

One possible answer to the decline of al-Andalus is that there was something in the natural environment, or other unchanging local conditions, that undermined the attempt to import a state to southern Spain. It's not clear why this would be the case, though. The agricultural technologies imported by the Muslims allowed for transforming the environment in a durable way.

A better explanation is that the Achilles' heel of the caliphate in al-Andalus turned out to be one that has plagued many autocracies: the problem of leadership succession. Despite all of its strengths, the history of Muslim government in al-Andalus suggests that much like the early Abbasid Caliphate, leaders tended to have very short tenures. Between 929 and 1031, rulers of al-Andalus governed for an average of less than seven years. In the year 1031 the last Umayyad caliph was exiled from Cordoba, the central administration collapsed, and al-Andalus broke apart into a set of petty kingdoms that fell to more cohesive Christian forces.[38] It is possible that these Christian forces were more cohesive because they had better solved the problem of leadership succession.[39]

The Disappearance of Islamic Democracy

Instead of democracy being reborn through state collapse, as happened in Europe, the inhabitants of the Islamic world experienced the opposite trend. Conquest led to a shift from early democracy to autocratic imperial rule. Geographic factors helped push in this direction; the rich river valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia allowed for a strong, centralized state to develop. But environmental factors aside, there was also a role of contingency in all this. It mattered that the Islamic conquests happened in the wake of centralizing reforms in Sasanian Iraq. Had Muslim armies invaded a century beforehand, they would have found a more decentralized polity where monarchs were weaker and where local notables held considerably more sway. Under these circumstances the black soil of the Sawad may have not served the same role in constructing an autocracy. Instead of conquering a state that was already in crisis—as happened with the fall of Rome—the Islamic invaders inherited a state in its prime.

The other factor that weighed against democracy in the Islamic world was the speed with which the empire grew. This rapid expansion was a product not only of Muslim thought; it was also due to the sweeping success that Muslim armies had, and this was not guaranteed at the outset. We have seen a pattern so far where societies that governed themselves through early democracy tended to be small in scale. Within a very short time, politics among the Arab peoples went from being a face-to-face affair to one where people could be separated by thousands of miles.

Some have suggested that what the Arab peoples really needed to do was to develop a practice of representation of the sort that Europeans used to overcome the constraints of scale.[40] But in Europe it took societies centuries to develop a full-fledged idea of representation—people had the time to figure this out because the geographical scope of individual states expanded slowly. In the Islamic world the expansion happened within a few short decades.

The Question of Persistence

Does the pattern I have described in this chapter help us better understand the absence of democracy in the Middle East today? I began with political conditions in pre-Islamic Arabia and then considered subsequent developments under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates; it was rapid acquisition of a strong state—not the arrival of Islam—that mattered most for the course of political development. Supporting this view, if we want to predict which countries today are democratic, the mere presence of Islam does a poor job. The country with the largest majority Islamic population, Indonesia, has been a vibrant democracy for several decades now. There are also vibrant democracies in West Africa and elsewhere that are majority Muslim. It turns out that whether a territory was conquered by Arab armies during the seventh and eighth centuries is a much better predictor of current autocracy than is the presence of Islam.[41]

But does this correlation between Arab conquest and current autocracy really mean that democracy in the Middle East was doomed as early as the seventh century CE? This version of the persistence argument is certainly far too simple a conclusion. Unlike either western Europe or (most of) China, the Middle East also experienced direct colonial control, and French and British colonial authorities certainly did not exactly support democratic movements in the territories they ruled.[42] In more recent years, outside support from major powers has also reinforced autocracy, much like it did when the Romans and Sasanians vied for influence in pre-Islamic Arabia.[43]

What I think we can say with more confidence is that by steering things in an initial autocratic direction, the Islamic conquests did help weigh against the future development of democracy. It is also true that successive autocratic regimes in the region have learned from the practices of their predecessors.[44] To see that we need only recognize that the Sasanian concept of the Circle of Justice was not finally officially abandoned by the Ottoman Empire until 1839.

And finally, we can also see that the pattern of conquerors—or would-be conquerors—choosing to inherit a state bureaucracy remains a practice even today. Consider the following passage from the text called the *Principles in the Administration of the Islamic State*.

> Preserving the capabilities [personnel and infrastructure] that managed the production projects under the prior governments, whilst taking into account the need to place strict oversights and an administration affiliated with the Islamic State.[45]

If those who conquered Iraq fourteen centuries ago had written a policy document, it might well have said exactly this: remove the top leadership and work through the existing bureaucracy to achieve your goals.

8

Democracy and Economic Development over the Long Run

THE HISTORY OF EUROPE'S rise has played a critical part in debates about the relationship between democracy and economic development. Though European states did not establish modern democracy until the twentieth century, for many centuries prior they did practice early democracy. Rule through representative assemblies is thought by many to have usefully constrained rulers from threatening innovation and production.[1] Part and parcel of this was that Europe was politically fragmented, and scholars have argued that this too spurred economic development.[2] There is also a debate about democracy and development in more contemporary settings.[3]

According to the standard view, the situation in China and the Islamic world could not have been more different from Europe: autocracy stifled development. The fact that the Industrial Revolution happened in Europe—not in China or the Middle East—is exhibit A in favor of this claim, and it is a hard one to dispute. But if we look further back in time we immediately encounter a problem with this line of reasoning. For much of the long span of history, China and the Islamic world were ahead in terms of economic development. How can this be? I will argue here that democracies and autocracies each have specific strengths and weaknesses when it comes to economic development.

Autocrats Did Well Early but Not Later

There is no small amount of debate among economic historians about when Europe overtook China. For many scholars, this occurred well before the Industrial Revolution. For others, the "Great Divergence" happened only because of the Industrial Revolution.[4] Whoever is right on this question, we should also recognize that there was a prior, early divergence in which China and the Middle East had living standards substantially above those in western Europe.[5]

In recent years economic historians have made heroic efforts in producing early GDP per capita estimates across world regions. These estimates involve much uncertainty, but if used cautiously they can still help us. We now have estimates of Chinese GDP per capita extending from the early part of the Song dynasty (980 CE) to the late Qing dynasty (1850 CE).[6] We also have per capita income estimates for the Islamic world from the eighth century through the thirteenth century, and we can extrapolate further.[7] Using these we can compare development in China and the Middle East with development in England, a European country for which we have particularly good long-run data.

Figure 8.1 shows per capita GDP estimates.[8] We see a clear early divergence in which China and the Middle East were ahead. We also see the emergence of the Great Divergence that involved Great Britain (and the rest of Europe) eventually becoming much richer than the other two regions.

A look at levels of urbanization tells a similar story about the Great Divergence. Economic historians sometimes use levels of urbanization as an alternative measure of development for historical economies. The logic here is that if GDP per capita is difficult, or impossible, to calculate, then estimates of the fraction of the population living in towns or cities serve as a good alternative. When we measure development through urbanization rates, the initial advantage of the Middle East over Europe appears substantially larger, though the date of convergence between the two regions remains essentially unchanged when compared to what we see with the GDP estimates.[9] We continue to see that China has a large initial advantage, and in this case convergence with Europe does not occur until

1600. By 1800 China had become substantially less urbanized—Europe surged ahead.

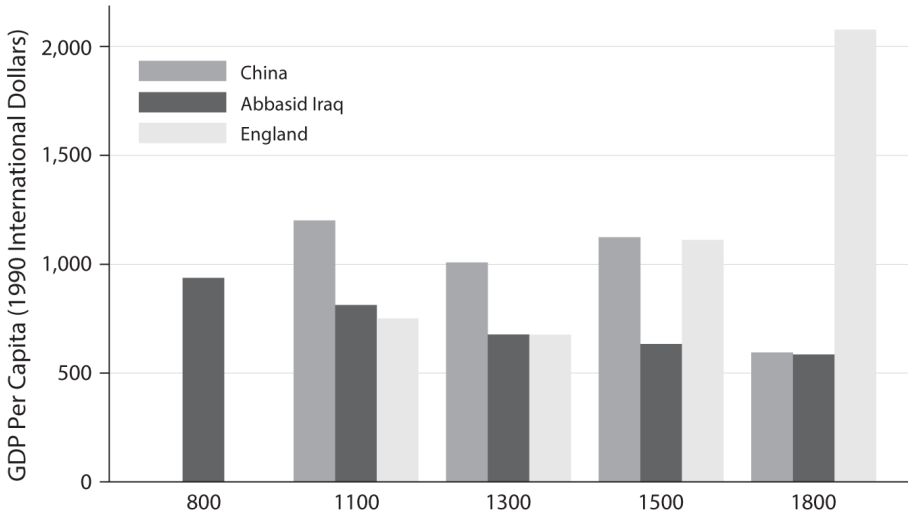


FIGURE 8.1. GDP estimates over time. (See the text for sources.)

We know finally that the great divergence translated into vast income differences for average people. By 1800 an unskilled laborer in either London or Amsterdam was earning about three times the amount that would be required to feed a family at the subsistence level. At the same time an unskilled laborer in Beijing was earning only enough to maintain subsistence.[10]

China and the Caliphate Were Not the Soviet Union

As we compare development outcomes across regions we need to also ask what type of growth was taking place. Some suggest that autocracies may for a time be able to grow more quickly than democracies thanks to their ability to force an increase in investment. Economists documented this phenomenon for the Soviet Union—massive investment produced rapid initial growth that could not be sustained.[11] Other economists argue that autocracies starting far from the world technology frontier may be able to grow quickly, but as they reach the frontier they stagnate because autocracy does not favor innovation.[12]

In fact, the early development success of China and the Abbasid Caliphate was not attributable to Soviet-style growth. One reason for this may be that in these polities, unity of governance over a large geographic area helped spur innovation. In an era of common jurisdiction with common customs and policies, ideas could flow freely.

Consider first this description by Andrew Watson, who wrote a classic text on agricultural innovation in the early Islamic world.

> The picture which emerges from our enquiries is one of a large unified region which for three or four centuries—and in places still longer—was unusually receptive to all that was new. It was also unusually able to diffuse novelties: both to effect the initial transfer which introduced an element into a region and to carry out the secondary diffusion which changed rarities into commonplaces.[13]

This does not sound like a place where autocracy stifled innovation. We should acknowledge, though, that this did not last forever; in later times the Ottoman Empire would resist the spread of critical new technologies. Economic historians have provided extensive evidence of how the institutions, practices, and policies of later Middle Eastern states sometimes prevented economic change.[14]

Consider next how an autocrat ruling over a large territory might directly encourage the diffusion of knowledge and agricultural practices. In the year 1012 CE there was a severe drought in the Yangtze River valley and several

other areas of China. Thanks to the empire's vast extent and its links to neighboring kingdoms, Emperor Zhenzong became aware of a rice variety that was drought resistant and fast maturing. He sent envoys to Fujian province, where farmers had begun growing the rice, and obtained thirty thousand bushels of seed for distribution to areas stricken by the drought. This also included a government effort to instruct farmers in how to cultivate the new seed. The new rice strain became known as Champa rice for the Champa Kingdom in central Vietnam where it had originated. Some rice specialists have compared its importance to the modern-day Green Revolution.[15]

This picture of a Chinese imperial state promoting innovation was not limited to agriculture; we can draw the same conclusion about both woodblock printing and movable type printing. Though the Song dynasty restricted the publication of political ideas, the state actively encouraged the spread of technical and scientific manuals.[16] This sounds a lot like China today. We could also speak of iron production and technology; Great Britain did not reach Song dynasty levels of iron production until the seventeenth century.[17] There were also major technological developments in water transport in China at this time and improvements in market structure.[18]

Even if China and the Middle East were at first ahead technologically, we still need to ask whether there was something about their political institutions that weighed against the much more rapid pace of innovation that would eventually occur in Europe during the Industrial Revolution. If the Industrial Revolution was a product of modern science, then this brings us to the famous "Needham question" asked by the British scientist and scholar Joseph Needham.

> Why did modern science, the mathematization of hypotheses about Nature, with all its implications for advanced technology, take its meteoric rise in the West at the time of Galileo? This is the most obvious question which many have asked but few have answered. Yet there is another which is of quite equal importance. Why was it that between the second century B.C. and the sixteenth century A.D. East Asian culture was much more efficient than the European west in applying human knowledge of Nature to useful purposes?[19]

Some authors have responded to Needham's question by suggesting that Chinese institutions allowed for innovation through *experiential* learning, such as the Champa rice episode, but they did not favor the development of a science based on *experimental* learning that would eventually prove so critical for Western development. The economist Justin Lin has argued that experiential learning would be favored by large population size, and given the arguments made above, he could have probably drawn the same conclusion with respect to the Abbasid Caliphate. However, he also argued that China was at a disadvantage when it came to experimental learning for the following reason: if Galileo had lived in China, he would have been a bureaucrat and not a scientist.[20] This is an interesting idea, but it begs the question of why experimentation could not be favored within the bureaucracy itself. After all, the early development of the Internet was supported by the U.S. government's Advanced Research Projects Agency. Many of the technical innovations that occurred in China during the Song dynasty derived directly from the work of bureaucrats. An excellent example here is that of Su Song, a renowned scholar of many different scientific fields who rose to a prominent position in the bureaucracy.[21]

In one of his earlier contributions on the subject, written in 1946, Joseph Needham provided an alternative argument to Lin's: maybe science of the experimental variety is fundamentally a democratic enterprise, and so it will most prosper in a democratic environment. By democratic here Needham meant not only the institutions of democracy but also the ideas of the enlightenment.[22]

Possibilities and Perils of Autocracy in China

The conventional story of growth in Europe says that under autocracy, people are unwilling to make investments or engage in innovation because the political system does not provide adequate protection of property. The emergence of representative assemblies in Europe is said to have solved this problem. So how did the Chinese achieve growth without assemblies?

The Song dynasty was actually an age of increased centralization and personalization of power where administrative checks on the emperor diminished. Under China's preceding dynasty, the Tang, emperors ruled as autocrats, but they also had to contend with and rely upon a class of prominent noble families. As we saw in chapter 6, the adoption during the Tang of a meritocratic exam undermined the great clans as did the series of fratricidal wars toward the dynasty's end.[23] Freeing themselves from clan politics, the first emperors of the Song relied on selection of bureaucrats through competitive examination. The Song emperors also established a system where officials were responsible directly to the emperor rather than to intermediate bodies.[24]

While the Song emperors pursued pro-commerce policies, the administrative centralization they implemented may have sown the seeds of future difficulties. Under Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of the Ming dynasty, China pursued several policies that undermined the market economy. The first was to overissue its paper currency, the *baochao*, making producers reluctant to accept it as a medium of exchange.[25]

The Ming also neglected investment in water transport, and this was most apparent in the regions surrounding the Song capital of Kaifeng. The capital now lay to the north at Beijing, a city that at the time was not deeply implanted in trade networks. Beijing's main link to the south of China was via the Grand Canal. The Ming emperors now put the canal under direct military control, with limited access for private ships.[26]

Finally, the Ming established a system of military farms in northern and western areas of the country. These were staffed by involuntary migrants. According to one estimate, by the year 1393, 15 percent of China's population had been displaced in this manner.[27] This is an astonishingly high figure for a society that lacked modern means of transport; it attests to

the very high coercive capacity of the Chinese state. One could hardly expect forced migration such as this to be good for economic development.[28] Military and strategic considerations were at the heart of this decision.

The trajectory of economic development under the Song and the Ming shows how the strength and centralization of an autocratic order could support economic development—including innovation—while simultaneously raising the risk of policy reversal. This is every bit as relevant for China today as it was during Song and Ming times.

Power and Prosperity in the Golden Age of Islam

Under the Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258 CE), the same ingredients that favored economic development in Song dynasty China operated in the Middle East. It turned out that, once again, autocratic leaders could promote learning and innovation, particularly in the early days. The difference with China was that autocratic rule under the Abbasids also proved very unstable, leading to diversion of resources into military conflict and away from investments in the irrigation systems that maintained the Iraqi economy in particular. With China we saw one problem of development in a centralized autocracy: powerful leaders can promote development, but they also have the means to quickly undermine it. With the Abbasids we see a second weakness of autocracy: the problem of leadership selection.

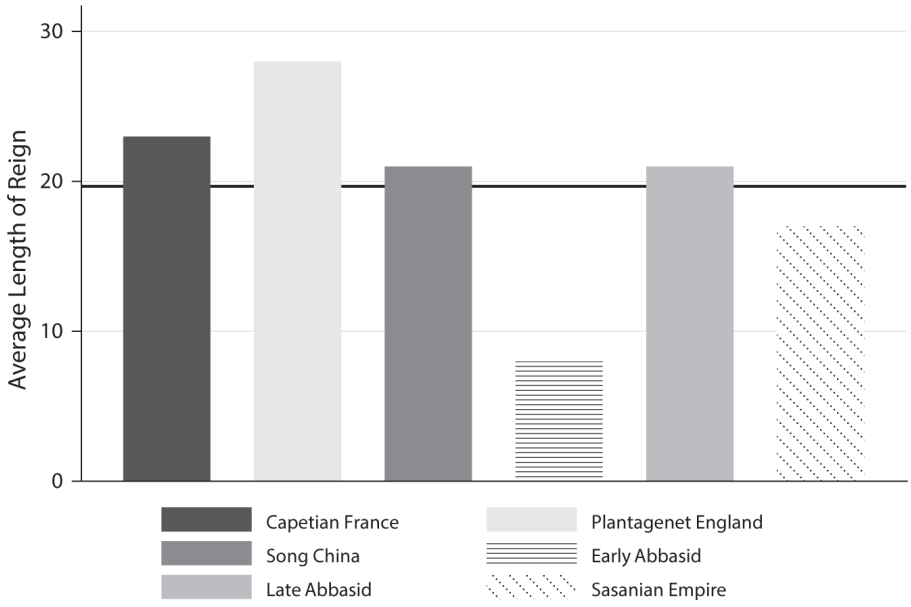


FIGURE 8.2. Ruler duration across six dynasties. (See the text for definitions.)

The Abbasid caliphs ruled over a large and unified empire, and this allowed agricultural innovations and practices to diffuse widely. The same was true for systems of market organization, as practices originating in the center of the caliphate at Baghdad were adopted in the provinces.[29] Another feature of the caliphate that favored economic development was the way in

which Abbasid caliphs promoted learning and funded a translation movement to make all scientific and related texts available in Arabic.[30]

Ultimately, however, political instability undermined the initial economic success of the Abbasids. To see this we can compare average ruler duration in several different societies, which is shown in Figure 8.2 for France under the Capetians, England under the Normans and Plantagenets, China under the Song dynasty, the Sasanian Empire, and finally the early and late Abbasid periods.[31] The division point here for the Abbasids is 945 CE, the point at which caliphs in Baghdad became figureheads as they had lost control of their provinces.

With an average ruler duration of only eight years, the early Abbasid period stands out for its instability. Several scholars have attributed this to the lack of a succession rule based on primogeniture or to the absence of institutionalized constraints on the monarch of the sort that existed in Europe.[32] Others emphasize the impact of polygyny—multiple wives meant multiple sons, compounding the potential for conflict.[33] There may be some truth in these arguments, but Song China, the Sasanian Empire, and the later Abbasids all practiced polygyny, and their rulers stayed in place for longer. The exact reason why the early Abbasid period was so unstable remains to be fully established. The more general point here may be that autocracies are particularly susceptible to this risk.

Abbasid instability had negative consequences for development. Southern Iraq was the principal source of agricultural production and revenue for the caliphate. Iraqi agriculture depended on irrigation systems that required continuous investment, but the Abbasids took the system they had inherited from the Sasanians as given. Political turmoil and instability led to a continual neglect of steps necessary to maintain production in rural areas.[34] Instead of investing in irrigation, the Abbasid caliphs devoted massive resources to the military in an effort to maintain control of their territories. This ended up creating further sources of instability. While the financial demands of a standing army were inelastic, revenues from agricultural taxation tended to be variable.[35] Under these circumstances it would have been ideal to develop a form of public borrowing, but this did not happen.[36] After 945 CE the Abbasid caliphs would continue to rule but as largely ceremonial figures.

Weak Autocracy and Growth in Europe

European rulers lacked a state bureaucracy of the sort that existed in China or the Middle East. This prompted many of them to rule in the fashion of early democracy, relying on representative assemblies for revenue. But as we saw in chapter 5, some European monarchs still tried to rule as autocrats, and once again, the case of Philip the Fair of France can help show us the implications of this political regime for economic development. Lacking coercive capacity, Philip could not do much to promote development—nor could he do much to hinder it.

People often remember Philip the Fair's reign for high-profile instances in which he trampled upon the property rights of some of his subjects.[37] On July 22, 1306, Philip expelled the Jews from France and in so doing seized their property for his own uses.[38] He followed this up by expropriating the assets of the Paris headquarters of the Knights Templar, the order that had been serving as his bankers. On May 12, 1310, Philip then ordered that fifty-four of the Templars be burned at the stake for heresy, an event that took place in central Paris. Burning your bankers at the stake does not sound like a strong indicator of property rights protection.

The episodes concerning the Jews and the Templars show that with respect to some groups to which he had ready access, Philip the Fair had both the inclination and the ability to despoil his subjects. But without a state bureaucracy he lacked the ability to do something like this on a broader scale.

Philip the Fair lacked not only fiscal capacity but also the ability to use other government organs, such as the judiciary, to promote or hinder development. In theory, Philip sat at the top of a clear judicial hierarchy, and he retained the right as king to hear any case he desired on appeal. But even in those instances where Philip would have desired to do so, there were important obstacles in his path.[39] The first was that local princes, barons, and lords in many locations retained very important de facto control over judicial affairs. The second obstacle involved the great fragmentation of judicial authority that often made it difficult to exert control. Finally, as was true with tax collection, Philip lacked sufficient numbers of trained and competent officials.

Early Democracy and Growth in Europe

There is a venerable argument that European representative assemblies favored economic development because they usefully constrained rulers. This could distinguish Europe from other world regions. It could also distinguish England and the Dutch Republic from a state like France where assembly activity was much weaker. The big problem with this argument is that formalized representative assemblies became a prominent feature of the European landscape as early as the thirteenth century, but Europe's economic takeoff did not occur until centuries after that point.

The explanation I will offer here is that European representative assemblies both helped and hindered growth. By placing checks on rulers, assemblies prevented the sort of dramatic policy reversals seen in China under the Ming, but those who held power in assemblies could use their positions to block new market entrants. This has been argued with regard to city-states.[40] The same argument could also apply to assemblies governing broader territories. By 1800, as Napoléon's armies swept away the old, estates-based order in western Europe, many saw this as something that promoted economic development.[41]

European states with strong representative assemblies initially had higher rates of urbanization than did other states, but over time this urbanization difference eroded. If urbanization is a proxy for economic development, this fact is hard to reconcile with the idea that assemblies unambiguously favored growth. To show this we can make use of data that I collected for two previous studies.[42] I will use this to sort individual European states into two groups: those that had a representative assembly with substantial prerogatives, including the ability to refuse new taxes, and those that either lacked an assembly or had an assembly with only weak prerogatives.

The results of this exercise are shown in Figure 8.3.[43] For each type of state—strong assembly versus weak or no assembly—I have calculated the level of urbanization at the end of the century in question. Initially, those states with a strong representative assembly had a level of urbanization that was more than twice that of other states, but over time this advantage

steadily attenuated. By 1700 states without strong assemblies had slightly higher levels of urbanization—it is a striking pattern.[44]

As a next step, we can make use of a second data set on European representative assemblies that was compiled by Maarten Bosker, Eltjo Buringh, and Jan Luiten van Zanden.[45] Although these data do not cover specific assembly prerogatives, they do cover a substantially larger number of European polities compared to the data set that I myself collected. Using this we can compare the growth trajectories of individual European cities in states with representative assemblies and those cities in states without assemblies. Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden show that on average, states with representative assemblies had larger cities, a potential sign that political institutions had a positive impact on economic development. However, by the year 1800 European cities in states with a history of having a representative assembly were only slightly larger on average than were cities in states without such a history (26,000 as opposed to 23,000 inhabitants). If there was a positive effect of assemblies on growth, then it must have been a rather small one.

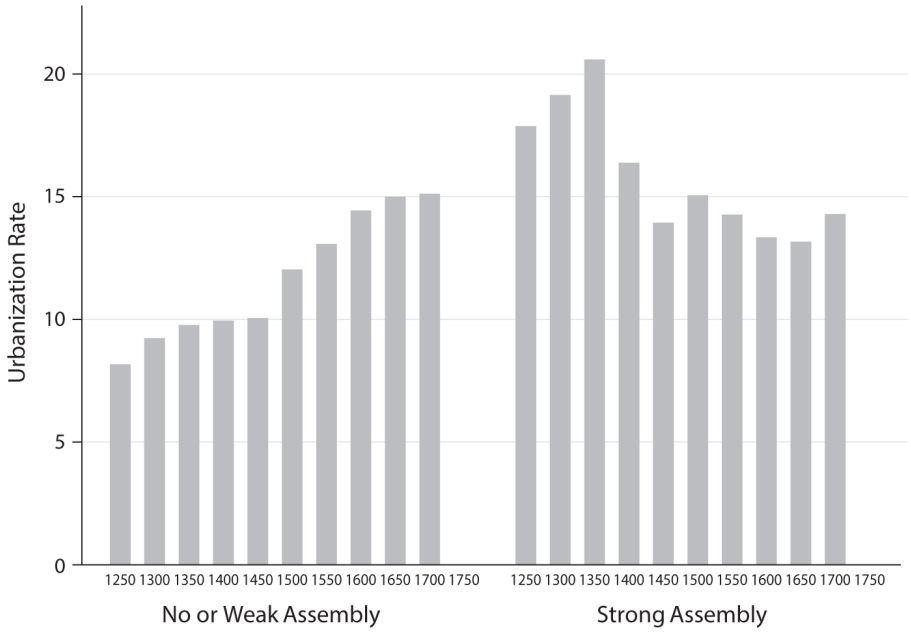


FIGURE 8.3. Urbanization and representative assemblies. (See the text for definitions.)

Conclusion: The Ambiguous Effects of Democracy

The lesson of this chapter has been that when we think about the effect of democratic institutions on development, we benefit from taking a long-term view. Instead of considering only the last half century, or even the entire last century, we have a millennium of evidence, and more, that can help us. Over this long stretch of time, political institutions in Europe have been frequently based on principles of early democracy and subsequently modern democracy. Polities in China and the Middle East had autocratic institutions.

Existing arguments about European assemblies and growth do not adequately consider the Achilles' heel of early democracy: those who control representative assemblies may restrict entry for new innovators. It's very possible that this helped hinder development in Europe, even as representative regimes provided a degree of security of property for those on the inside.

In the next chapter I will suggest that one reason England may have been the first to industrialize is that its parliamentary institutions were fundamentally different than those of the early democracies that existed on the continent. In a polity like the Dutch Republic, a modern economy emerged, but it was ultimately held back by a distinctly premodern set of representative institutions that gave blocking power to local interests. In England from an early date this power of local interests was minimized.

PART III

Modern Democracy

9

Why England Was Different

SINCE JOHN BRIGHT'S first reference to the "mother of parliaments" in 1865, many have argued that the English invented this political practice. The more accurate assessment is that the English invented a new kind of parliament. England was different because its rulers and people developed a style of governance that would evolve into modern democracy. English representatives had more distance from their constituents because they were not bound by mandates. Nor could their constituents require them to refer back for approval before final decisions were made. This system had clear advantages, especially from the point of view of monarchs, but it was also in many ways less democratic. Direct public participation was limited, and local interests were bound by majority decisions with less opportunity to block change. I will draw a contrast between England and the Dutch Republic. While the Dutch Republic had a claim to being the world's "first modern economy," the Dutch did not invent modern parliamentarianism. They instead had political institutions that more closely resembled early democracy. This may in turn have held back economic innovation and development.

The Roman Background

Britannia became a province of the Roman Empire in 43 CE. It remained one until the withdrawal of direct Roman rule, dated to the year 410. Traditionally, what happened next has been described as an invasion and wholesale replacement of the local Romano-British population by barbarians. Bede, the famous chronicler who wrote in the early eighth century, described things in the following way. In the year 449 a warlord named Vortigern invited the Angles and the Saxons to settle in Britain to fight against his enemies. What the Angles and the Saxons did instead was conquer and slaughter the local population so that "the fire kindled by the hands of the heathen executed the just vengeance of God on the nation for its crimes."[1]

Today, thanks to modern DNA evidence, scholars know that there was somewhat less vengeance than Bede had thought. The fraction of DNA of Anglo-Saxon origin in people of local descent currently living in central and southern England is less than 50 percent.[2] So, this was not a situation where outsiders imported a wholly new society and system of government. What the Anglo-Saxon invasions did do was dramatically reshuffle the cards beyond what happened elsewhere in Europe. Across the channel in places like Gaul, the fall of Rome resulted in a collapse of central authority, but Roman institutions for local governance survived. In England there was more of a need for a new beginning; what had been a flourishing Romano-British economy based on large agricultural estates crumbled in short order after the withdrawal of Roman military protection.[3]

The Hundred and the Shire

Once they became fully developed, local institutions in Anglo-Saxon England involved governance at the level of shire or county and below that at the level of the hundred, which was in some areas known as the wapentake.[4] We saw in chapter 5 that the wapentake was of Scandinavian origin. The organizational notion of the "hundred" may have been a Carolingian import, but as we will see, hundreds in Anglo-Saxon England had a much more active assembly life.

The Hundred as an institution reached its full prominence in the tenth century, and it would remain important until late in the medieval period. Each hundred was simultaneously a territorial unit, a subdivision within a shire (or county), and a court presided over by a hundredman. There is some debate among historians about exactly who these hundredmen were. In some, generally older, accounts, the hundredman is suggested to have been a reeve, or official of the king, perhaps someone who was granted a manor in exchange for service.[5] This would imply a top-down arrangement. For others, the hundredman was simply a prominent member of the local community. This would imply more of a bottom-up arrangement but one where the Crown had introduced uniformity of procedure. Even in this case, the Crown retained the option of punishing hundredmen who did not carry out the tasks assigned to them.[6] A hundred also often included a sworn jury of twelve men to judge cases. The number twelve may be of Scandinavian origin—via the wapentake—possibly because in Norse mythology the gods themselves were twelve in number.[7]

Under Edward the Elder, who ruled from 899 to 924, the following decree stipulated how a hundred should function.

> Each reeve was to hold a meeting (*gemot*) every four weeks, and to see to it that every man was totally worthy of his folk-right, and that each law-suit should have a day appointed for hearing and settlement.[8]

At this phase, the Hundred was primarily a judicial institution, and a later text known as the *Hundred Ordinance* shows that one of the most common legal disputes at the time involved ownership and thieving of cattle.

The other thing we see clearly here is that while the Hundred may have had its origin in folk assemblies deep in the past, by the tenth century it was also fundamentally a system that was managed from the top with a degree of uniformity. We will see the same exact pattern when describing the shire and its court as well as the king's council, the *witan*. It contrasts strongly with patterns seen elsewhere in western Europe at this time where central rulers had much less ability to manage and organize local events.

The shire, or county, was the next unit above the Hundred in the territorial division of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom.[9] The shire first emerged in the Kingdom of Wessex before subsequently spreading elsewhere as England fell under a unified Anglo-Saxon kingship. From the late tenth century onward, the shire was presided over by someone known as the *shire reeve*, or sheriff. The shire reeve would play a critical role not only in the administration of justice but also in raising revenue. The shire would itself also have a regular assembly, or shire court.

In chapter 5 we saw that at the turn of the first millennium, Anglo-Saxon England was the sole state in Europe—apart from areas under Muslim control—that levied a direct and kingdom-wide tax on agricultural produce. The immediate stimulus for this was the need to pay the Danegeld. It was the existence of the hundred and shire system that made this possible. After the period of Danish tribute, this would lead to the creation of an annual national tax known as the *heregeld*, or army tax.

Witenagemot

The final Anglo-Saxon institution that we need to consider is that of the king's council, or *witan*, that we first encountered in chapter 5. Meetings of the *witan* were referred to as *witenagemot*. As with other Anglo-Saxon institutions, historical scholarship on the *witan* has tended to oscillate between seeing this council as a bottom-up arrangement imposed by society or a top-down arrangement imposed by kings. In my view the interesting feature of the *witan* was that it was some of each. This is what also made for the strength of the Anglo-Saxon state.

Like other kingdoms throughout western Europe, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries the individual kingdoms that would eventually become amalgamated into England had periodic assemblies, typically including the great and the good, but sometimes more than that. These assemblies were episodic events. During the tenth century assemblies became more regularized in the expanded Kingdom of Wessex that would eventually become known as the Kingdom of England. The most authoritative recent account of the early English Parliament begins the discussion of Parliament's origins with the reign of Æthelstan (r. 924–939), the son of Edward the Elder.[10] We know from "witness lists" from Æthelstan's assemblies that these could often involve a hundred individuals or more.[11] So, they may have been elite gatherings, but they were not small and intimate councils. The dates of assemblies during this period also became much more regular, often timed to coincide with traditional feast days associated with sacred moments in the Christian calendar.

Nineteenth-century historians often wrote of the *witan* as a representative body through which England's people, via their ruling elite, placed constraints on monarchs. In reaction to this, some twentieth-century historians flipped things in the opposite way—the members of the *witan* were said to be "mere retainers of the king."[12] More recent scholarship by Levi Roach provides an evidence-based way of thinking about this problem. In addition to being large, the witness lists to Æthelstan's assemblies show a great regularity in attendance from one meeting to the next. If "mere retainers" were likely to change from one meeting to the next to suit a king's whims, then the witness lists tell a very different story. They suggest

that it was not only the choice of the monarch but also one's position in society that mattered for being able to attend.

The second question we need to ask about the *witan* is whether its meetings were simply stage-managed events of the sort organized by Philip the Fair or actually involved an element of consent. Here the evidence points clearly in the latter direction, even if we lack eyewitness accounts of the sort that we used for Philip's assemblies in chapter 5.[13]

The final question is what the members of the *witan* actually did when they met. The answer here is that the assemblies considered diplomacy, proposed royal charters, and, of course, discussed taxation.

The Normans Inherited a State

Rather than constructing a state of their own, like so many other conquerors considered in this book, the Norman kings inherited one.[14] The most direct way to show the Anglo-Saxon inheritance is to consider the famous Domesday Book. As a comprehensive assessment of all wealth—conducted in 1086 by William the Conqueror—the survey is rightly described as being unique in western Europe.[15] But we should also ponder this further fact: a Domesday-style assessment was never repeated by the Normans after 1086. Reinforcing the idea of an Anglo-Saxon inheritance, historians have shown that Domesday was itself compiled with the help of existing tax lists dating back to the period before the conquest. One of the features facilitating the compilation of lists like these in the Anglo-Saxon era was the relatively high (for the time) level of literacy. This itself went hand in hand with the fact that English, rather than Latin, was the language of official government business.[16]

The Normans also inherited the Anglo-Saxon pattern of royal councils. While the membership of these councils changed, William the Conqueror kept the tradition going because he found them useful. The one key difference with the initial Norman assemblies was that attendance now became obligatory as a result of feudal ties. Those who received land from William in exchange for service had an obligation to provide council. A feudal system like this had not been practiced by the Anglo-Saxons.[17]

Magna Carta Was Not a Big Deal (Initially)

Magna Carta followed the Norman conquest after a century and a half, and historians have repeatedly disagreed about its importance. For some Magna Carta was a key constitutional moment; Bishop William Stubbs wrote that "the whole of the constitutional history of England is little more than a commentary on Magna Carta."[18] For others the Magna Carta itself was not a watershed; it was the way in which the event would be interpreted centuries later that mattered. To add to this, there is a debate about the uniqueness of Magna Carta within Europe. Some believe that by obliging King John to sign the document at Runnymede, the English barons set England off on a course from other European nations. For others, Magna Carta was simply one example of a number of similar events happening in Europe at this time from the Privilegio General in Aragon to the Golden Bull in Hungary.[19]

The first problem with the "unique watershed" interpretation of Magna Carta is that the events of 1215 were hardly momentous. Magna Carta itself was never signed by King John, nor did he seal an original version of it. What took place at Runnymede was instead a verbal agreement backed up by oaths, as well as the threat of force. Soon afterward, King John and his barons returned to open conflict. Though Magna Carta contained a provision stating that certain taxes could not be levied without consent, King John ignored this, and several subsequent British monarchs did the same. It was the need for cooperation from members of society that ultimately encouraged later monarchs to respect and reissue the charter.

A second reason to disagree with the watershed idea is that Magna Carta did not result in a fundamental break in the pattern of English governance. As we saw previously, English monarchs—in particular Anglo-Saxon monarchs—had been raising taxes with the help of assemblies since the tenth century. Magna Carta did include the explicit stipulation that "No scutage or aid is to be levied in our realm except by the common counsel of our realm," but this felt more like reaffirmation of an older practice.

Though the events of 1215 hardly seem like a turning point, the same forces that propelled early democracy in other societies would soon lead to a reassertion of Magna Carta's importance. On several occasions where

King John's successors got into trouble with their barons or found themselves in need of funds, they chose to reissue Magna Carta so as to reconfirm the rights and responsibilities that had been agreed to at Runnymede. It was the weak position of English rulers that forced them to make this concession. The best way to see Magna Carta is as one event in a long sequence in which English kings and those they ruled would bargain over governance. Had King John not agreed to the charter at Runnymede, or had the barons not proposed it in the first place, the underlying forces would have still pushed in the same direction.

Ultimately, where Magna Carta was most important is in creating a focal point of agreement for future advocates of consensual government and the rule of law. It provides a particularly powerful illustration of how once an expectation of government by consent is codified, subsequent people can continually refer back to it. In the seventeenth century, amid attempts by Stuart monarchs to expand their prerogatives, Edward Coke could write about Magna Carta and the rights enshrined therein, as part of what many called Britain's "ancient constitution."

There were many other European events that resembled Magna Carta, and this meant that supporters of consensual government elsewhere could also have a common rallying cry. J. C. Holt, the author of the authoritative history of Magna Carta, said precisely this: "the reiteration of the same story throughout western Europe carries obvious implications."[20] In an era where warfare was becoming ever costlier, monarchs found themselves compelled to work through assemblies composed of barons, members of the church, and representatives from towns. In 1188 King Alfonso IX of León was obliged to give important privileges to his vassals, and he did so in the context of a representative assembly called the *cortes*. In 1205 King Peter of Aragon drafted a document to do the same.[21] In Hungary with the Golden Bull of 1222, feudal lords obtained a guarantee of their privileges with an annual meeting to discuss disputes and political problems.[22]

King John's "Heavy Exactions" Were Not So Heavy

One of the most common ideas about Magna Carta is that it was triggered by what are sometimes called King John's "heavy exactions."[23] This gives the impression of a powerful English monarch who needed to be constrained, but a look at early English revenue data tells a very different story. We saw in chapter 1 that around the year 1300—some eight decades after Magna Carta was agreed—King Edward I of England was able raise about 1 percent of GDP in revenue. This was slightly more than Philip the Fair of France was able to raise but not much more. In contrast, in 1086 CE the Chinese emperors of the Song dynasty were able to raise upwards of 10 percent of GDP in revenue while in 850 CE Abbasid caliphs could extract 7 percent of production from the Sawad of Iraq.[24]

The next thing we should do is ask how heavy King John's exactions were in comparative terms. Figure 9.1 shows annual revenue figures during King John's reign.[25] These are expressed as a share of estimated English GDP.[26] For purposes of comparison I have added two horizontal lines showing peak levels of fiscal extraction in Abbasid Iraq and Song China.

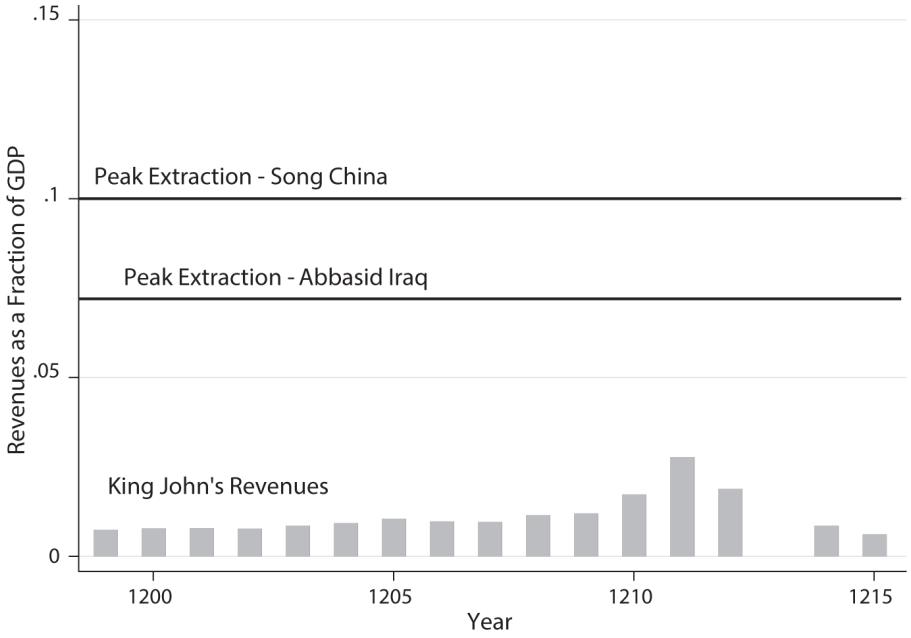


FIGURE 9.1. King John's heavy exactions in comparative perspective.

The idea that John's exactions provoked a constitutional crisis is borne out by the data. During the early part of his reign, John for the most part extracted about 1 percent of GDP in revenue. Then, quite suddenly, in the years immediately before 1215 he tripled this rate of extraction. It's also clear from detailed tax breakdowns that the lion's share of this increase came from ordinary revenue raised in the English counties. The drastic decrease in revenue extraction for 1215 is due to the fact that a baronial rebellion against John was already well underway.

To judge how heavy these exactions were, we also need to compare King John's exactions with what was going on in other societies around the globe, and here we see that even at its peak, revenue extraction under John was less than half of that in the Abbasid Caliphate and less than a third of that in Song China. These societies were able to maintain these rates of extraction without succumbing to a tax revolt. It would seem then that King John attempted to go as far as he could with the autocratic method of revenue extraction, and this was not very successful. The absence of a state bureaucracy explains the difference.

It is also sometimes argued that by agreeing to the principles of Magna Carta, English monarchs after King John were able to raise more revenue than would have otherwise been the case. Instead of an unsustainable series of heavy exactions implemented with force, rulers established a contract with society to raise a solid and sustainable revenue stream. Two facts suggest that this argument may be overrated. The first is that Edward I in 1300 was only able to extract about as much in revenue as John did during the period before his "heavy exactions." The second is that it would be a very long time before any English monarch was able to extract 3 percent of GDP in taxes in a sustainable way. This would only happen during the latter stages of Henry VIII's reign.[27]

Where England Really Did Pioneer: The Absence of Mandates

England was not exceptional because it had Parliament or because of the Magna Carta: it was the absence of mandates for parliamentary representatives that was different. Today we think of it as natural that in a democracy, representatives should not be bound by mandates imposed by their constituents. It is simply the way that things should be done. Representatives should instead have free rein to make laws as they see fit, and their constituents should then decide whether to reelect them. This is a British parliamentary legacy.

In chapter 5 I emphasized that it was very common for constituencies in medieval assemblies to bind their representatives with mandates. In the strictest case, deputies had no power to make decisions on their own. In the Burgundian assemblies of the Low Countries this practice was enshrined in the practice of *ouïr et rapporter*.[28] The word *ouïr* is an archaic French formulation for "hear," so this expression means "hear and report." In cases where representatives did have decision-making power, this was accompanied by strict instructions from their constituents. If a representative wanted to deviate from this line, they would need to refer back for further input. The mandate system created a great deal of local blocking power. In some cases, there was a principle of unanimity rule, or the equivalent idea that an individual community could simply declare that it was not bound by a decision. We also saw this in chapter 2 in many non-European societies. Among the Huron, and other groups in the woodlands of northeastern America, groups were not considered bound by a decision unless they had individually accepted it. The same norm prevailed in pre-Islamic Arabia.

For European monarchs the mandate system was unwieldy, and so they sought a way around it by demanding that constituencies grant full powers to their representatives to decide things as they saw fit. Faced with the urgent need to raise finance for war, a process of continual reference back to constituencies promised delay and indecision. To buttress their claim that representatives should have greater autonomy, as we saw in chapter 5,

monarchs began using a recycled phrase from Roman law known as *plena potestas*, meaning full powers.[29]

But simply invoking *plena potestas* didn't do much to improve things for most European monarchs. When Philip the Fair convened what would become known as France's first Estates General in 1302, he decreed that deputies to the assembly should have full powers. This was dutifully agreed to, but the assembly resulted in only a very broad, and rather vague, consent to being taxed. The real business of sorting out how much tax would be paid was left for protracted negotiations with individual communities.[30] In Spain, monarchs also continually sought that deputies be granted full powers but without much greater success. The monarchy eventually gave up on its central assembly, the Cortes, and instead began negotiating with individual Castilian towns.[31] The one place where an attempt at *plena potestas* was absent was in the Dutch Republic. Geographic proximity and easy water transport made a system of reference back feasible, but even in the Dutch case, the system was unwieldy.[32] The Dutch Republic often had difficulties in speedily funding military engagements, precisely because there were so many parties to be consulted in order for this to happen.

English monarchs were more successful than others in seeing that *plena potestas* actually meant something. Our first trace of full powers being mentioned in a summons to Parliament comes from the year 1268. In that year, it was requested that representatives of each of the twenty-seven boroughs should bring with them letters patent with a borough's seal, and the letters were to state that the borough granted the equivalent of full powers of attorney to the representative in question.[33]

Reference to *plena potestas* became a permanent element of royal summons beginning in 1294 with what subsequently would become known as the Model Parliament (held in 1295). This is part of the royal summons in that year:

> Moreover, the said knights are to have full and sufficient power for themselves and for the community of the aforesaid county, and the said citizens and burgesses for themselves, and the communities of the aforesaid cities and boroughs separately, then and there, for doing what shall then be ordained according to the common council in the premises;

so that the aforesaid business shall not remain unfinished in any way for defect of this power.[34]

The reference to "full and sufficient power" is what people usually focus on when reading this passage, but the reference to no unfinished business is also critical. This removed the possibility for borough representatives to refer back to their communities before making decisions. After 1294 a reference to full powers was part of the summons to every English Parliament until 1872.[35]

There were still a few occasions after 1295 when members of the Commons stated that they needed to refer back to their constituencies. This happened in 1339–40 in a context where, at the outset of what would prove to be a long war with France, Edward III was desperately attempting to raise war finance.[36] The magnitude of the demands he made prompted members of the Commons to state that they needed to refer back to their constituencies before discussing the matter further.[37] This was the last time that such an exceptional request would occur.

We owe the fact that modern democratic representatives operate without mandates to the peculiarities of English history. The most plausible reason England was different is that this was a historical legacy. From the Anglo-Saxon period onward, English monarchs had achieved a degree of centralization that those on the continent could only envy. If one was to predict where mandates would disappear, you would say England, and in a way, this also means that modern democracy has a somewhat autocratic feel to it compared to early democracy.

Despotism and Good Government under the Tudors

As with so much else about English history, historians have not been of one mind when it comes to the Tudors, the house that ruled England from 1485 to 1603. For Bishop Stubbs, writing in the late nineteenth century, King Henry VIII was "the tyrant whose every caprice is wise and sacred."[38] Half a century later, the Cambridge historian Geoffrey Elton would establish a new consensus that said the exact opposite. Instead of being marked by despotism, the Tudor era was one of state building, establishment of the rule of law, and the solidification of parliamentary control.[39] Elton would in turn receive criticism for having taken the argument too far in the other direction.[40]

So, who is to be believed? In my opinion there are elements of truth in each of these radically different views of the Tudors, and they highlight a theme that I have emphasized throughout this book: the question of sequencing. If the early democratic institutions of government by consent are established first, then it is possible to subsequently build a bureaucracy without veering inevitably into autocracy or despotism.

Let's consider first the evidence on Tudor despotism, or what is better described as attempted despotism. In support of those who argued that Henry VIII had despotic tendencies, Lawrence Stone offered the following list of actions: Henry extended the definition of treason to include speech; he arbitrarily seized the wealth of England's monasteries; he declared himself head of the church; he attempted to rule through proclamation; and he hoped to create a standing army.[41] So, Henry was no mild-mannered democrat.

Evidence of despotism aside, it is also clear that the Tudors made important strides in creating a bureaucratic state. Geoffrey Elton took the view that prior to a series of reforms initiated after 1529 by Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's chief minister, the English state still fit the medieval pattern of resembling a ruler's household.[42] This style of government principally involved the king ruling through his immediate entourage without clear lines of authority or competency of the sort that we would expect in a bureaucracy. The effect of Cromwell's reforms was to reduce the importance of the royal household as well as of what had been

an informal inner ring of leading counselors. There would now be a set of departments, known as courts, a number of which were charged with separate aspects of revenue collection. There would also be a more formal privy council. Though Thomas Cromwell laid out impersonal bureaucratic procedures, he failed to apply them to himself.[43] Perhaps for this reason, Cromwell made many enemies and ultimately fell out of favor with Henry VIII. In June 1540 he was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower, and a month later Cromwell was beheaded in public.

The striking thing about the Tudor reforms is that they did not turn England into an autocracy. It is true that Parliament did not design the Tudor bureaucracy—this was led by ministers of the Crown—nor did it yet have formal oversight of the sort that it would acquire in later centuries, but there is also no doubt that Henry VIII was compelled to rule jointly with Parliament. The so-called "Reformation Parliament," which lasted from 1529 to 1536, was England's longest-sitting Parliament to date. During this period, Parliament asserted its supremacy in law. England would now, at least in principle, be ruled by a sort of collective executive under the phrase the "King-in-Parliament." One interpretation of this is that Henry VIII abided by this arrangement because he could rule more effectively with it.[44]

The alternative view of why Parliament continued to matter is that Henry was checked by "powerful medieval institutions and political traditions."[45] Political scientists might draw a similar conclusion using different language; once members of Parliament had learned how to act collectively, they were in a better position to resist royal encroachment. This illustrates the importance of sequencing. By the time of Henry's accession, England had a well-oiled system of political representation, and in mobilizing during this period Parliament could draw upon this. The best illustration of this is the lengthy opposition to a bill presented by Thomas Cromwell in 1539 that would have given the Crown power to rule by decree. The bill faced bitter opposition in both the Lords and the Commons. Ultimately, a statute allowing for rule by proclamation did pass Parliament, but there were very significant checks placed on its use, and the Act itself was repealed in 1547.[46] Subsequent Tudor monarchs would often prefer to call Parliament only infrequently, most notably in the case of Elizabeth I, but they would not attempt to bypass it. The later efforts of Stuart monarchs to do precisely

that would lead to a conflict that resulted in a more complete form of parliamentary supremacy. This is what we will now turn to in the next section.

The Two Faces of Parliamentary Supremacy

The next critical step in English constitutional development was the shift to parliamentary supremacy. After a century of conflict between Crown and Parliament, in 1688 Parliament succeeding in reasserting and amplifying its "ancient" prerogatives. Parliament now met much more frequently than before. It began to play an intensive role in raising revenue and in managing the new system of public borrowing. It also passed other forms of economic legislation. In the face of this, the direct influence of the Crown waned considerably. The last year in which the Crown vetoed parliamentary legislation was 1710.[47] It now mattered less who was king or queen than who controlled the majority in the House of Commons and the executive functions that came to be known as "The Ministry." This would gradually evolve into a system with a prime minister, a cabinet, and a norm of ministerial responsibility. Between 1688 and 1715 there were frequent elections and intense competition between two nascent political parties, the Whigs and the Tories. After 1715, the Whigs established an enduring majority that would last until 1760. Later commentators would refer to this as the "Whig Supremacy."[48]

The significance of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 has been abundantly recognized and emphasized by historians, economists, political scientists, and others.[49] Rather than repeat what others have said, here I would like to emphasize a fact that has received less attention. It mattered a great deal that parliamentary supremacy was established in a country where the practice of binding representatives with mandates had already disappeared. It also mattered a great deal that the practice of making decisions by simple majority had already been established, with no possibility for individual localities to block decisions or opt out of them. All of this meant that when parliamentary supremacy was established, this occurred with a body that had very substantial insulation from local interests. This was a very different situation from parliamentary supremacy in the Dutch Republic. The final thing to recognize about 1688 is that, as Jack Goldstone has emphasized, William of Orange's successful invasion was a highly contingent event that could have failed. If so, the story of modern democracy might have been different.[50]

Once the British Parliament became supreme, its insulation from local interests would prove to have both good and bad consequences, or what we might call the two faces of parliamentary supremacy. The first, positive face was that a parliament unburdened by local blocking interests could pass important economic legislation favoring development. The second, more negative, face was that a partisan executive could act in an autocratic and corrupt manner.

The First Face of Parliamentary Supremacy: High State Capacity

After the Glorious Revolution of 1688 the number of Acts of Parliament passed expanded dramatically. In the two centuries prior to 1688, Parliament passed an average of thirteen Acts a year, though this figure varied substantially from year to year since Parliament sat infrequently. In the century after 1688, a Parliament that sat more or less continuously now passed an average of 121 Acts per year.[51] It was a stunning transformation. In the period of the Whig Supremacy (1715–60) about a third of these pertained to the economy or to improvements in communications. Most Acts in the former category were enclosure Acts, while most in the latter category involved the construction of turnpikes. An Act would give a group of named individuals the right to construct a turnpike in a specific place and to collect tolls for its use. Previously, turnpikes would have been under the control of individual parishes that did not have the right to collect tolls. Extensive research by Daniel Bogart has shown that turnpike Acts led to a massive increase in investment and that this brought improved travel and communications.[52]

Underlying the effectiveness of these turnpike Acts was the fact that while they were generally initiated by local people, and while local people were often consulted on them, Parliament remained supreme in its ability to pass them. William Blackstone described parliamentary supremacy in the following terms:

> It hath sovereign and uncontrolable authority in making, confirming, enlarging, restraining, abrogating, repealing, reviving, and expounding of laws, concerning matters of all possible denominations, ecclesiastical,

> or temporal, civil, military, maritime, or criminal: this being the place where that absolute despotic power, which must in all governments reside somewhere, is entrusted by the constitution of these kingdoms.

And he continued with this statement.

> All mischiefs and grievances, operations and remedies, that transcend the ordinary course of the laws, are within the reach of this extraordinary tribunal. It can regulate or new-model the succession to the crown; as was done in the reign of Henry VIII and William III. It can alter the established religion of the land; as was done in a variety of instances, in the reigns of king Henry VIII and his three children. It can change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom and of parliaments themselves; as was done by the act of union, and the several statutes for triennial and septennial elections. It can, in short, do every thing that is not naturally impossible; and therefore some have not scrupled to call its power, by a figure rather too bold, the omnipotence of parliament.[53]

Many recent scholars have written of 1688 as the beginning of an era of "limited government" because of parliamentary limitations on royal authority. But Blackstone's observations speak to an alternative interpretation: the Glorious Revolution of 1688 initiated the era of an unlimited Parliament.

The Second Face of Parliamentary Supremacy: An Autocratic Executive

One of the persistent fears of medieval Europeans who sent representatives to royal assemblies was that they would be captured by the center. Spending too long in the capital opened up possibilities for a central ruler to exert corrupt influence. This was one reason why mandates were deemed necessary. The irony of Great Britain after 1688 is that it succumbed to precisely this problem, and this could happen because after 1295 mandates were outlawed. Instead of corruption coming from the Crown, it came instead from a new and powerful type of parliamentary executive led by

Robert Walpole. He is often referred to as Great Britain's first prime minister.

In the first thirty years after the Glorious Revolution there was active, and often extreme, competition between two parliamentary parties, the Whigs and the Tories. When it came to candidate selection, monitoring votes, and parliamentary organization, these two groups could lay claim to being the ancestors of modern parliamentary parties. This all occurred in an environment of frequent elections. The Triennial Act of 1694 stipulated that elections to the House of Commons should take place at least once every three years. In practice the pace of elections was even more rapid and with frequently shifting Commons majorities. There were nine parliamentary elections held between 1695 and 1715. After 1715, the Whig party succeeded in establishing an enduring parliamentary majority that would last until 1760.

With a comfortable majority, after 1715 the Ministry under the Whigs implemented a number of restrictions on political participation. This effort included lengthening the term of parliaments to seven years, expanding the use of "placemen" in the Commons, and passing restrictions on open political expression. We cannot pass off each of these measures as being attributable simply to the fact that Robert Walpole, the Whig leader, was corrupt or to this being part of the spirit of the times. Whig corruption was possible because of Parliament's absolute power. Changes like this would not have been possible in the Dutch Republic.

By extending the term of parliaments, the Whigs made it easier to maintain their majority. The Septennial Act of 1715 stated that elections must occur at least once every seven years, and it would remain in place until 1911. With a long statutory term like this, a majority would find it more likely that they would be able to time elections in a way that best suited them.

To justify the Septennial Act, Whig leaders could not simply say that they were seeking to preserve their majority. The Act's supporters instead offered the justification that the Triennial Act, and the frequent elections it entailed, had stirred up public passions to such a degree that electioneering became a game of slander. It is true that even twenty-first-century

purveyors of fake news would have been impressed by some of the vitriol that appeared in British print publications at this time.[54]

By introducing the number of "placemen" in Parliament, the Whig majority also helped reinforce its position through patronage. Would-be reformers had sought rules stipulating that members of Parliament could not simultaneously hold offices remunerated by the state. During the tenure of Sir Robert Walpole, the Whigs went in exactly the opposite direction. He significantly expanded the number of placemen in Parliament and stipulated that placeholders were required to vote with his Ministry on all bills. This made it much easier to retain a substantial Whig majority in the Commons.[55] In other cases, Walpole used outright bribery to win elections and to solidify his parliamentary majority. In doing so some of the publications that he sponsored explicitly supported corruption. Corruption was said to be "a result of the present circumstances of the world, the natural condition of human affairs."[56]

From 1715 onward, the Whig majority in the Commons also periodically took steps to quell any sort of "disturbances" that might disrupt their rule. In 1715, and at several points thereafter, they suspended habeas corpus. With the Riot Act of 1714, the Whig majority made it possible for local authorities to declare any gathering of twelve or more people to be unlawful. The Riot Act would not be officially repealed until 1967.

The Whig Supremacy marked a period of political stability for Great Britain with a simultaneous move away from democracy. The period that followed—one in which no single party dominated Parliament—would see increased accusations of bribery and corruption. One popular cartoon from 1774 depicts the prime minister, Lord North, standing over a stream of sewage portraying those who had received bribes. John Wilkes is shown with a broom stating that he will "stem the stream."[57] This of course bears an uncanny resemblance to the contemporary claim in U.S. politics that someone needs to "drain the swamp." For many in the American colonies, his case illustrated everything that was corrupt and tyrannical about the British parliamentary system.

England versus the Dutch Republic

To get a better sense of how the English pattern of assembly governance was fundamentally new, we can compare it to the Dutch Republic. The Dutch Republic also had a strong set of representative institutions, but they were more characteristic of early democracy than modern democracy.

The Dutch Republic had a complicated set of governing assemblies that bewildered some outsiders, particularly those used to a more centralized approach to politics. There were assemblies at the level of each town, at the level of each province, and then an estates general for the republic as a whole. It was ultimately the towns that had the power in this system.[58] Individual towns bound their deputies to higher-level assemblies with strict mandates. In another characteristic of early democracy, there was a strong notion that each major town needed to agree to a proposal for it to pass, and they could opt out of measures with which they disagreed. Individual towns had the right to regulate trade, market entry, and even citizenship rights.[59] Governance inside the towns of the Dutch Republic involved limited participation that tended to become increasingly oligarchic over time.[60]

One anecdote is useful for illustrating how perplexing outsiders often found the Dutch system of government.[61] During the 1660s the French Crown briefly entered into a military alliance with the Dutch. Louis XIV and his ministers repeatedly remarked that it was a chore to try to deal with a country whose assemblies seemed to have as many different opinions as there were participants. Louis dismissively called the Dutch Republic an *état populaire* or "popular state" and the best strategy he could think of was to write the Dutch patronizing letters expressing an almost parental exasperation with their system of governance.

The great irony of the Dutch political system is that this was a distinctly premodern set of arrangements in a country that has otherwise been said to have had the "first modern economy."[62] It is worth asking whether premodern Dutch politics ultimately hampered economic growth whereas England's more modern institutions fostered it. This may help explain why the Industrial Revolution happened in England and not the Netherlands.[63]

Several words of caution should be heard before we consider this problem. The first issue is that it is inevitably difficult to find an

explanation for something that happened only once; only one country could be the first to industrialize. The second issue is that there are eminently plausible economic answers to the "Why England?" that have little to nothing to do with political institutions. Robert Allen, a prominent economic historian, has made the case that industrialization happened in England first because English wages were high, creating a demand for labor substitutes, and because available energy was cheap, creating the possibility of substitution once new technologies emerged.[64] It was not because England had a parliament that there were coal deposits located near Manchester. Nor is it likely that high wages for laborers prevailed because of a Parliament that at the time was composed exclusively of wealth holders. The best case one could make for British political institutions is that a parliamentary regime helped create the space for the type of technical innovations—derived from experimental scientific knowledge—that allowed industrialization to take place.

As one measure of the pace of innovation, we can consider the number of patents awarded in England and the Dutch Republic over time.[65] Figure 9.2 shows the number of patents by twenty-year period. The series for the Netherlands begins in 1575, just after the Dutch Republic asserted its independence from Spain.[66] The series for Great Britain begins in 1617 toward the end of the reign of James I.[67] When it came to innovation, the Netherlands at first outshone England. If we considered the content of some of these patents, the comparison is even starker. During his reign, James I of England handed out patents as special favors to individuals for products that did not represent an innovation—on May 1 in the year 1617, Nicholas Hillyard was granted the exclusive right to print drawings, engravings, and portraits of the king, based on his demonstrated skill in this area.[68] This was simply conferring a monopoly rather than an aid to innovation.

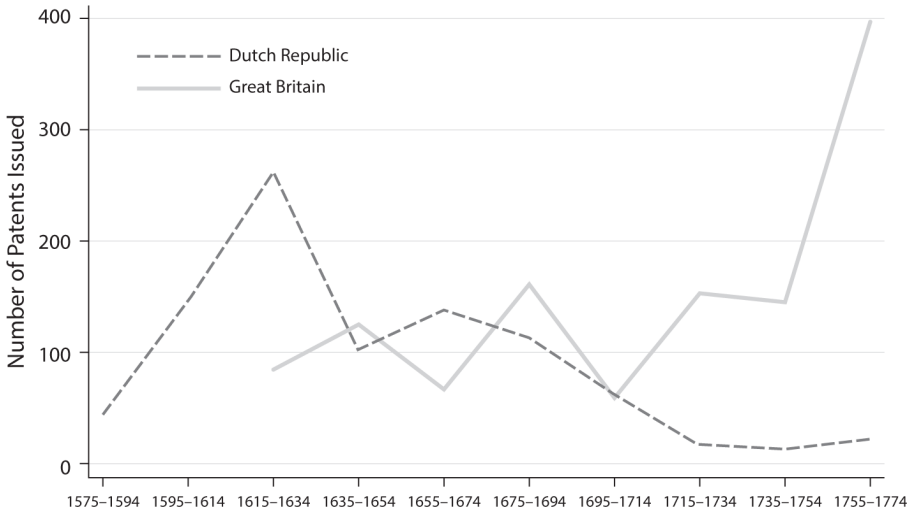


FIGURE 9.2. Patents in England and the Netherlands. This figure reports numbers of registered patents by twenty-year period for the Dutch Republic and Great Britain. The Dutch series was compiled by van Zanden and van Riel (2004) based on underlying data from Doorman (1940). The British series was compiled by this author based on underlying data in Woodcroft 1854.

What is equally striking in Figure 9.2 is that despite a rapid early pace of patent issuance, after about a century the rate of economic innovation in the Netherlands slowed dramatically. As this happened, the pace of patent issuance increased dramatically in England, particularly from the mid-eighteenth century onward. The most common story that many would tell for England is that the Glorious Revolution of 1688 helped improve the security of property. Perhaps, but if so it took about sixty years for the effect to kick in as far as the production of patents is concerned. Rather than suggesting that property was insecure before 1688, it might be more accurate to say that English institutions after 1688 did not get in the way of innovation once it did begin to accelerate. There is also an alternative variant to this story, recently proposed by Bas van Bavel.[69] He argues that stagnation in the Dutch Republic was driven by the way that rising wealth inequality gave elites increased power to reshape political institutions to make them more exclusive and to create barriers to entry into markets, hobbling growth.

To get a better sense of how English political institutions mattered for development, consider the following fact: eighteenth-century economic progress benefited from Parliament's protection of property, but it also at times depended on the ability of Parliament to override local rights. This was a way in which the English Parliament in terms of its prerogatives more

strongly resembled autocracies than early democracies.[70] The spread of canals and turnpikes in Great Britain was made possible precisely by private Acts of Parliament that overrode the interests of some landowners. Turnpike trusts set up in England were given powers of eminent domain.[71] No such developments could take place in the Dutch system where the structure of political systems gave local interests blocking power. Despite its autocratic constitution, ancien régime France was also characterized by institutions that gave local interests considerable blocking power. It was only after the centralizing reforms of the French Revolution that large-scale investments could be made that raised agricultural productivity.[72]

England's Failure to Complete the Transition to Modern Democracy

England was the first country to have a modern representative assembly—one with full powers and no mandates—but it was not the first to establish modern democracy because it delayed so long in expanding the suffrage. One of the paradoxes of English political development is that while the English pioneered the development of democratic ideas—including the idea that all (men) should have the vote—it would first be in England's colonies in the New World that this would happen (for white men). This puzzle offers us an important opportunity to think about when democracy is possible.

Serious discussions of universal male suffrage in England began with the Revolution of the 1640s. The Revolution saw the development not only of radically egalitarian ideas but also of a potent new tool for coercion: the New Model Army.[73] This was a form of military organization substantially more robust than the ad hoc militias that had preceded it, and in a sense it was the modern era's first professional standing army. The problem was that if the New Model Army would prove effective at defeating the monarchy under Charles I, it would prove equally effective at stamping out the most ardent supporters of democracy within its own ranks.

To understand the radical nature of seventeenth-century proposals for universal suffrage, we need to consider electoral practice at the time. Since 1429 the suffrage for elections of knights of the shire to Parliament had been restricted to individuals with a freehold that would return forty shillings in rent per year. For comparison, an unskilled laborer in the building trade in southern England at this time would have made four pence per day, or about fifty shillings a year. A skilled craftsman would have made about seventy-five shillings a year.[74] The justification offered for the forty-shilling rule was as follows.

> Item, whereas the elections of knights of the shires chosen to come to the parliaments of the king, in many counties of England, have now of late been made by very great, and excessive number of people dwelling within the same counties of the which most part was by people of small

> substance, or no value, whereof every of them pretended a voice equivalent, as to such elections to be made with the most worthy knights and esquires dwelling within the same counties: whereby manslaughters, riots, batteries, and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same counties, shall very likely rise and be, unless convenient remedy be provided in this behalf.[75]

Over time the forty-shilling rule would represent a very significant restriction on the suffrage, one that survived until 1832. At the time it was passed, however, the rule represented more of a clarification of who could vote rather than a new restriction.[76] A forty-shilling freehold was a restriction but not a sufficiently tight one to restrict electoral participation to only great magnates. In one voting tally from Nottinghamshire in the fifteenth century, there were 625 participants in an election. Based on population estimates, this would have represented about 4 percent of adult males in the county.[77]

By 1630 the forty-shilling restriction on voting in shire elections had been in place for two centuries. In a famous account of the 1630s and 1640s, the British Marxist historian Christopher Hill argued that England during these years witnessed substantial class antagonism fed by economic depression.[78] In this environment radical clerics began contesting both crucial elements of church doctrine and established relationships between elites and masses. The emergence of the Levellers and the Diggers, two radical movements associated with the New Model Army, occurred around the same time. The Levellers focused primarily on issues of constitutional reform while the Diggers (who called themselves the True Levellers) advocated more direct efforts to establish economic equality.[79] The Levellers had an explicit political agenda that included some elements that have become standard in modern democracy.

One of the Leveller demands was to have frequent elections. This was a desire that British colonists in North America would subsequently share, as would the Anti-federalists in the debate over the U.S. Constitution.

A second Leveller demand involved a call for what amounted to near universal male suffrage. In their *Agreement of the Free People of England*,

published on May 1, 1649, four Leveller leaders called for expanded suffrage along the following lines.

> All men of the age of one and twenty yeers and upwards (not being servants, or receiving alms, or having served the late King in Arms or voluntary Contribution) shall have their voices: and be capable of being elected to the Supreme Trust, those who served the king being disabled for ten years only.[80]

The sentiment in favor of universal suffrage was hardly shared by all within the New Model Army. The army was led by a set of senior officers commonly known as the "grandees." The grandees had used the idea of an ideological movement to mobilize an army, and the Levellers were a major part of this. Had the Leveller movement succeeded in bringing about an expansion in voting rights, this would have fit with the pattern we have seen elsewhere in this book. When elites need to mobilize their people for war, they often agree to allow these people to have political rights that did not previously exist. But by 1649 the problem for the Levellers was that the Civil War was over, Charles I had been beheaded, and their side had won. The question for the grandees was whether to lead a social revolution that would democratize England or to instead leave existing hierarchies in place.[81]

The initial discontent of the Levellers against the grandees stemmed from arrears of pay within the New Model Army—a tried and true motivation for army revolts throughout human history. In this instance, the revolt quickly developed into a much broader conflict over differing political agendas.[82] The best known of the grandees were Thomas Fairfax, Henry Ireton, and Oliver Cromwell. They came from among the ranks of England's landed gentry. Not coincidentally, the grandees also favored a suffrage that would be restricted to landowners. Ireton justified this in the following terms:

> I think that no person hath a right to an interest or share in the disposing of the affairs of the kingdom, and in determining or choosing those that

> shall determine what laws we shall be ruled by here—no person hath a right to this, that hath not a permanent fixed interest in this kingdom.[83]

In calling for near universal suffrage, the Leveller leaders, John Lilburne, William Walwyn, Thomas Prince, and Richard Overton, anticipated what would become a key element of modern democracy. But they went even further than this in calling for something not present today: elections on an annual basis.

> We agree and declare: That the next & al future Representatives, shall continue in full power for the space of one whole year: and that the people shall of course, chuse a Parliament once every year so as all the members thereof may be in a capacity to meet, and take place of the foregoing Representative: the first Thursday in every August for ever if God so please. (*Agreement of the Free People of England*)

The problem for the Leveller leaders was that by the time they published this manifesto, they were already locked up in the Tower. The broad suffrage that the Levellers hoped to see would not be implemented in England until 1918—a very long time between the generation of an idea and its application. Near universal suffrage (for free white males) would be implemented in the American colonies much earlier, and the call for annual elections of the legislature would become an Anti-federalist rallying cry during the debates over the U.S. Constitution.

There may be many reasons for the failure of the Levellers to achieve their political goals. As part of these, it is hard to escape the importance of the New Model Army. What has often been called the world's first modern military force allowed for the creation of a dictatorship, at least for a time, and as long as one had the loyalty of the army, there was not much to stand in one's way. Had the English Revolution not seen the establishment of such a potent military force, it is possible that things would have turned out differently.

Conclusion

Developments in Great Britain went halfway to modern democracy. As was the case with so many other European polities, from early in the medieval era English governance was characterized by active assemblies. What was different was that from a very early date—long before the Norman conquest and long before Magna Carta—these assemblies took on a centralized character where the king had a stronger position than was the case elsewhere. This pattern would continue, and it resulted in England having a fundamentally different kind of parliament. During the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries English monarchs were able to establish a practice that representatives to Parliament should not be bound by mandates. This was something that monarchs elsewhere in Europe tried to achieve but never with this degree of success. After 1688 and the establishment of parliamentary supremacy, the absence of mandates would result in a high degree of cohesion and capacity for the national legislative body. This allowed Parliament to play an active role in the economy, but it also made for a government that was more distant from the people. Ultimately, England did not complete the transition to modern democracy because it delayed for several centuries before establishing universal suffrage. As we will see in the next chapter, it took a very different set of conditions in North America to produce this outcome.

10

Democracy—and Slavery—in America

WHILE GREAT BRITAIN LED the way by establishing a new form of representative government, it was Americans who developed something closer to modern democracy. One view of democracy in America is that it did not really take flight until the Revolution. It was at this point that Americans, as a result of an intellectual effervescence, created a modern democratic state, and this then spread to the rest of the European world. It is undeniable that the American experiment inspired revolutionaries elsewhere. But to understand the origins of democracy in America we need to realize that it wasn't the intellectual developments of the late eighteenth century that produced it. Democracy in America emerged from earlier British ideas that were transplanted into a new environment. It was an environment where there was nothing resembling a state, where land was abundant relative to labor, and where those who sought to rule had no choice but to seek the consent of the governed. In other words, these are exactly the conditions where democracy would be expected to flourish. This would quickly translate itself into a situation where, from the seventeenth century, a broad suffrage for white males prevailed. For Africans the story would be very different. I will show how the same underlying conditions that produced democracy for white colonists also encouraged the invention and expansion of chattel slavery.

Early Colonial Assemblies

Historians seem to agree on the following basic point. While those who first established British colonies in the New World often intended to govern them in a top-down, bureaucratic way, things turned out to be radically different. To understand this process, we need to first chart the development of popular assemblies in colonial America. The story of colonial assemblies in North America casts doubt on any simple explanation suggesting that this was just a British transplant. There is little doubt that without the British parliamentary tradition, the North American colonists would have had less of a repertoire for governing. But the colonists also took things in a much more democratic direction than had ever been done in England. Participation (for free white men) was broader than it would be in England until the late nineteenth century. Elections were much more frequent than the seven-year interval that would prevail in England from 1716 until 1911. In several colonies, people also had opportunities to control representatives in between elections by using impeachment or by issuing explicit instructions or mandates.

Fifty years ago, two scholars at Harvard offered alternative interpretations of why colonial American institutions resembled early democracy. For Samuel Huntington, a political scientist, this was all about inheriting English political ideas characteristic of the Tudor period (1485–1603).[1] For Bernard Bailyn, a historian, the explanation lay with the material conditions that prevailed in North America. By altering the balance between rulers and ruled, these conditions pushed the colonists back to an earlier form of governance. The evidence fits Bailyn's interpretation better, and it also fits closely with the explanations for early democracy that I have offered throughout this book.

For Huntington, early American colonists inherited views from the Tudor era. In his words, "The English colonists took these late medieval and Tudor political ideas, practices and institutions across the Atlantic with them during the great migrations in the first half of the seventeenth century."[2] But Huntington ignored the fact that colonial American institutions were much more democratic than Tudor institutions in their later phases. During Queen Elizabeth I's entire forty-five-year reign there

were only ten parliaments held, and only one of these lasted more than a year. Compare that frequency with American colonial assemblies that met every year. During the Tudor era only a very small fraction of adult males would have had the right to vote. In colonial assemblies a very broad manhood suffrage prevailed from the start.

For Bernard Bailyn, colonial assemblies were a British practice, refracted to reflect North American conditions. He expressed this idea in the following terms.

> What had taken place in the earlier years of colonial history was the partial re-creation, as a matter of fact and not of theory, of a kind of representation that had flourished in medieval England but that had faded and had been superseded by another during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[3]

That earlier system Bailyn referred to was one where representatives were akin to attorneys operating under strict mandates from their constituents. Bailyn argued that the reason why colonial governments adopted this system is that they had no choice. In a vast area with a weak central government, individual towns had a high degree of autonomy, and they saw themselves more as aiding the central government than being aided by it.

As I said above, those who initially founded the British colonies in North America often had no intention of furthering the cause of democracy. This was most evident in the case of Virginia where a joint stock company based in London held ultimate control; the initial government on the ground at Jamestown was strictly hierarchical. It was also in evidence in Massachusetts where Puritan settlers formed a government based on exclusion of the "unworthy."[4]

What took place soon after the initial settlements was that the circumstances to which Bailyn referred pushed in the direction of democracy. Other scholars have made analogous arguments. A high ratio of land to labor, combined with the absence of anything resembling a bureaucratic state, made consensual governance a necessity. J. R. Pole argued that colonial assemblies became a necessity because the London-

based joint stock companies that had "control" of the colonies were just that, companies, and not state bureaucracies—they lacked the means to rule on their own.[5]

Massachusetts

In the case of Massachusetts, after a few decades, settlements were dispersed across a wide territory, making the exercise of hierarchical control from Boston difficult if not impossible. Nothing resembling a state with coercive power existed, and the legacy of this was apparent even as late as Alexis de Tocqueville's visit to America in the 1830s. He remarked that in New England, towns and their assemblies had preceded the construction of a state.[6] In the absence of a state, the only alternative, as we have seen in so many other societies, was to rule by consent, in this case through what would become known as the New England town meeting. As one historian put it, "The town meeting solved the problem of enforcement by evading it."[7] Without coercive institutions or a bureaucracy, it was logical that all should have the right to vote in order to build consensus.

The Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641 established a broad manhood suffrage along the following lines: "The Freemen of every Towneship shall have the power to make such by laws and constitutions as may concerne the welfare of their Townes."[8] In addition it was specified that "It is the constant libertie of the freemen of this plantation to choose yearly at the Court of Election out of the freemen all the general officers of this Jurisdiction."[9]

What we have here is an extraordinary statement about a broad suffrage. It cannot be said to have derived from Puritan ideology because the Puritan leaders themselves did not support it. In the 1630s John Winthrop had argued against a greater role for elections to the General Court, the assembly of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. To bolster his case Winthrop invited John Cotton, a prominent minister, to give a sermon to the General Court where he preached against the dangers of excess democracy.[10] Puritan ministers favored a suffrage restricted to members of their church and a deferential relationship between governor and governed equivalent to what they saw as appropriate between man and wife.[11] Nor can it be said to derive simply from English ideas or practice. In 1641 the Levellers had not

yet pronounced in favor of a broad suffrage, and they were ultimately unsuccessful in achieving that goal.

The General Court first met in 1634. Initially, the idea was that all free men should attend, but the onerous nature of this task quickly resulted in a system of representation with individual towns or plantations selecting representatives.[12] These representatives were selected by a broad franchise. In 1691, when the Province of Massachusetts Bay was established, the qualifications for the suffrage were set at either holding land that would rent for forty shillings a year or holding forty pounds sterling of property. This was a clear imitation of English practice, but while the forty-shilling rule was a very significant restriction of the franchise in England, in the North American context of broad landownership, this was much less so. Scholars generally assume that most free men retained the right to vote, and there is concrete evidence to back this up. Estimates for eighteen Massachusetts towns during the eighteenth century show that on average 72 percent of adult males could vote.[13]

In thinking about assembly development in Massachusetts, it is also hard to miss the obvious link with taxation. In the absence of state power to tax, governance by consent was the necessary alternative. As a joint stock company, the Massachusetts Bay Company did not have a right to tax its stockholders, and so, logically, it did not have a right to tax the residents of the colony either. This created an opening for the General Court at its first meeting in 1634 to assert that it alone had the right to levy taxes. But the General Court did not have much capacity to collect taxes either. The Reverend John Cotton might have done something like exhort people to pay their taxes, but he had no means to assess and collect them. When taxes were levied, it was left to the individual towns of the colony to do the job.[14] This was the pattern of decentralized tax enforcement of a sort that had existed in a great many early democracies.

Virginia

The establishment of the Chesapeake Bay colonies followed a very different process from that in Massachusetts, but here too local realities eventually pushed political institutions in a more democratic direction. The settlement at Jamestown in 1607 was established by the Virginia Company of London

with the hope of discovering gold and silver. The company had full rights to manage the affairs of the settlement as it saw fit, and the initial idea was that it would do so through a small council of individuals that it itself chose. This was not a democracy, and there was no intention of establishing anything resembling a representative government. As the Jamestown settlers struggled with problems of disease, starvation, and lawlessness, the initial response of the authorities was to crack down in the most authoritarian way with severe and summary punishments.

Two critical events ended up changing colonial governance in Virginia in the most drastic way possible. The first was a shift in who controlled the Virginia Company back in London. The second was the European discovery of how to cultivate tobacco for export. There was no silver or gold to be found, but this turned out to be a good substitute.

In 1619, Edwyn Sandys became the new treasurer (equivalent to governor) of the Virginia Company based in London. Sandys was a prominent politician and Member of the House of Commons who was known for being a leader of the "opposition" to James I. Sandys advocated mutual rights between king and people.[15] The motivation for his program tells us much about the conditions that led to the development of democracy in colonial America. Facing an insufficient number of people willing to settle in Virginia, Sandys set about finding people who might deliver potential migrants from among the ranks of the poor while also providing inducements for people to migrate voluntarily.

Sandys solicited local justices of the peace in England for youths of fifteen years and over who were "burdensome to the Parish where they live." If the parish contributed five pounds sterling, the company would then organize for the transport of a youth to Virginia where—as it was put—they "shalbe entertayned in good manner as servants and apprentizes."[16] The end result for many was not very entertaining. Most of the arrivals at Jamestown during this period found a colony that was ill-equipped for large numbers, and they soon died from starvation, disease, or both.[17]

The second strategy Sandys pursued was to offer more favorable conditions in Virginia through land grants and democratic rights. To this end, the company gave grants of land to settlers who had already been there for some time. It also sought to attract new settlers with programs where

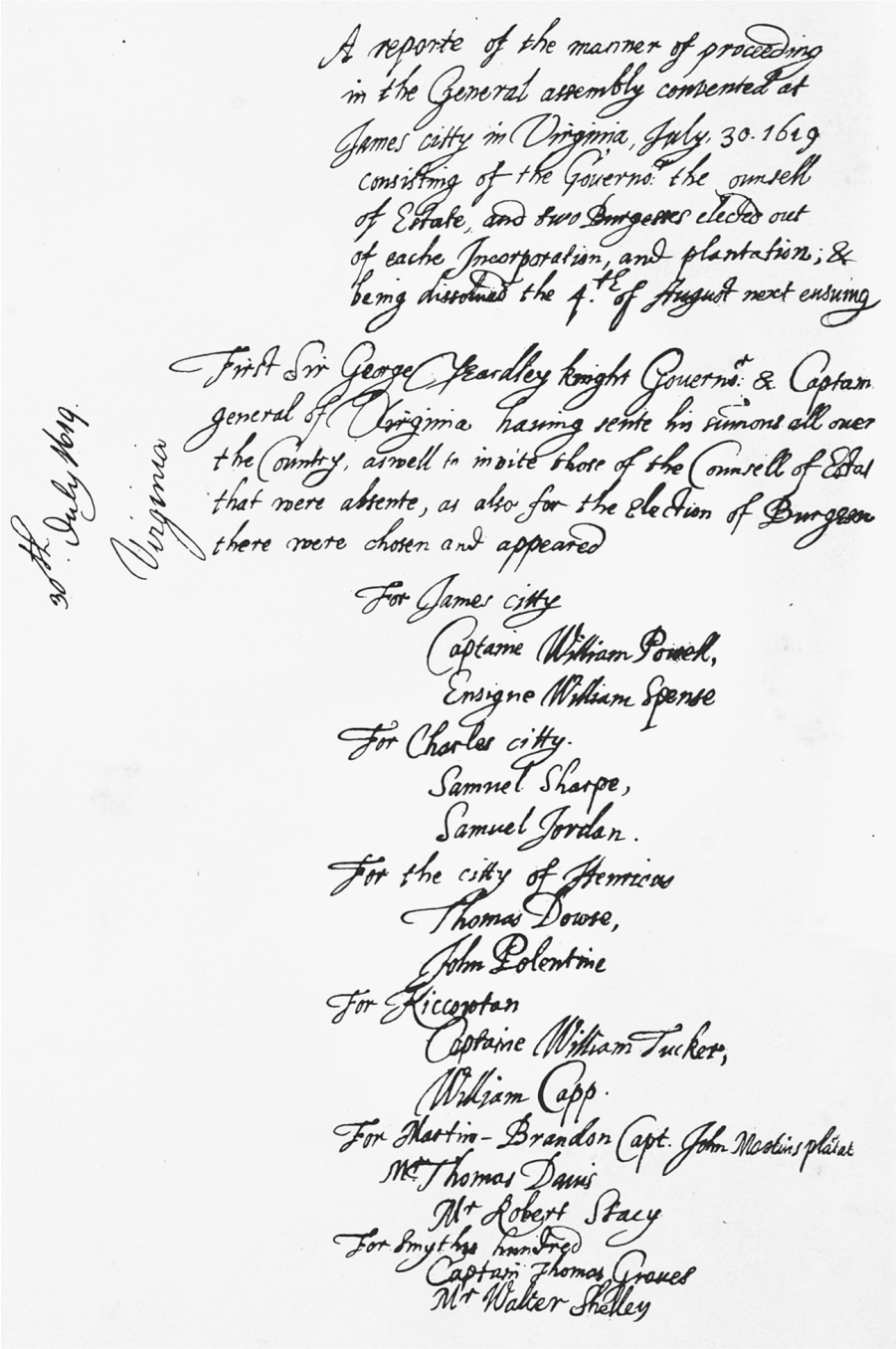
they would sharecrop on company land for a certain time; after that they would control land of their own.[18]

In addition to land grants, the company also laid out a framework for a more democratic form of governance in Virginia. Day-to-day affairs in the colony would be managed by the governor and council. Important affairs would now be managed jointly with a general assembly composed of two burgesses from each of eleven different settlements in the colony. In establishing this practice, the company made clear that decisions should be made by a majority and that the burgesses would be chosen by the "inhabitants." Though the company did not explicitly state that there should be a broad suffrage, this was the clear implication.[19]

The first democratic assembly of European settlers in North America took place between July 30 and August 4, 1619, at Jamestown. It was composed of the governor and the council, who had been chosen by the Virginia Company, and two representatives from eleven different settlements. This first assembly, however, was not a great success, as many of its members fell ill in the hot summer weather.

> In conclusion, the whole Assembly comaunded the Speaker (as nowe he doth) to present their humble excuse to the Treasurer Counsell & Company in England for being constrained by the intemperature of the weather and the falling sick of diverse of the Burgesses to break up so abruptly.[20]

It is a testimony to the link between taxation and representation that one thing the Virginia assembly members did still manage to do before they adjourned was to levy an initial tax on tobacco to support local officials. When subsequent attempts were made by the council to levy taxes on its own, the assembly successfully asserted its prerogatives in the area.[21] Poll taxes were collected by justices of the peace.[22] These were officials appointed by the council, so this differed from the pattern in Massachusetts.


A reporte of the manner of proceeding
in the General assembly conuented at
James citty in Virginia, July. 30. 1619
consisting of the Gouerno: the counsell
of Estate, and two Burgesses elected out
of eache Incorporation, and plantation; &
being dissolued the 4.th of August next ensuing

30. July 1619.
Virginia

First Sir George Yeardley knight Gouerno: & Captain
general of Virginia hauing sente his summons all over
the Country, aswell to inuite those of the Counsell of Estat
that were absente, as also for the election of Burgesses
there were chosen and appeared

For James citty
Captaine William Powell,
Ensigne William Spense
For Charles citty.
Samuel Sharpe,
Samuel Jordan.
For the citty of Henricus
Thomas Dowse,
John Polentine
For Kiccowtan
Captaine William Tucker,
William Capp.
For Martin-Brandon Capt. John Martins plant.
Mr Thomas Davis
Mr Robert Stacy
For Smythes hundred
Captain Thomas Graues
Mr Walter Shelley

FIGURE 10.1. Report of the First General Assembly of Virginia. *Source: Proceedings of the General Assembly of Virginia, July 30–August 4, 1619*, ed. William van Schreeven and George Reese (Jamestown: Jamestown Foundation of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 1969).

Maryland

Unlike in Virginia and Massachusetts, the founding charter of Maryland allowed explicitly for an assembly of free men to assist the proprietary

governor, Cecilius Calvert, in managing the affairs of the colony.[23] But the charter also gave Calvert an essentially monarchical role in passing law. His initial attitude with respect to assemblies was to attempt to preserve this prerogative and to ignore the stipulation in Maryland's charter that governance should allow for the "advice, assent, and approbation of the free-men" of the colony.[24] The first Maryland assembly took place soon after the colony's initial settlement in 1634—a meeting that all free men were to attend.[25] The tiny size of the colony's population made this feasible. As had happened in Massachusetts, this soon evolved into a representative system in which most free men had the right to vote.

Among the three colonies I have considered here, Maryland is the case where hierarchical, autocratic control persisted the longest, but the problem was that without the possibility of any state coercion, it simply did not work. For significant amounts of time, efforts by proprietary governors in Maryland to ignore demands made from the assembly led to the ungovernability of the province. The other element that undid the governors was that without any means of raising revenue on their own, they were forced to rely on the assembly for help. As one observer said, "The Burgesses hold the purse in their hands or at least hold the Strings."[26]

It took a bit longer for the voice of the citizenry to be heard in Maryland, but the end result was the same as in the other colonies. By 1715 the Assembly of Maryland became the venue in which the elected representatives of free men in the colony could express their will, including by vetoing legislation.

A Broad (White, Manhood) Suffrage

We can see from the assemblies in Massachusetts, Virginia, and Maryland that long before American independence, the British colonies in North America distinguished themselves by having a broad suffrage. In fact, in several early cases they had unrestricted suffrage before limitations were subsequently put into place. In Great Britain at this time probably less than 3 percent of adult males enjoyed the right to vote in parliamentary elections. So how did this happen?

Ideas about democracy must certainly have helped in the achievement of a broad suffrage in North America, but we need to remember that the radical ideas that emerged in Great Britain were never actually implemented there. The broad suffrage envisioned by the Levellers would only be implemented in England with a delay of more than two centuries, and even then, only gradually. So there must have been something else that was different between the English and the North American contexts.

Just as it favored the development of colonial assemblies, the need for labor also placed pressures on political elites in the colonies to offer an expanded suffrage. To investigate the colonial suffrage, we can employ the same framework we have used throughout this book. One critical factor we considered was the ability of people to find satisfactory options elsewhere if they are unhappy with how they are being treated. In the case of Great Britain's North American colonies there are two questions to ask here. The first is whether people would have an option to exit to alternative venues if they were unhappy once they arrived. As we already considered, the existence of abundant land would have made this feasible. We then also need to ask a second question. What might prompt people to migrate from Great Britain in the first place?

In Great Britain unskilled laborers had few political rights, but during the seventeenth century they experienced a steady increase in the wages received, and this affected the bargain that colonial American elites needed to offer to get them to migrate. From the early sixteenth century, wages for unskilled laborers in London rose continuously. By the beginnings of American colonization these wages were higher than in other European cities, and this divergence would only increase over time. Figure 10.2

shows this trend using welfare ratios that represent how far above the subsistence level a family with one wage earner would have been. The seventeenth-century increase in the welfare ratio was not only a London trend. Data from southern English towns show a similarly rapid increase, albeit from a lower starting point.

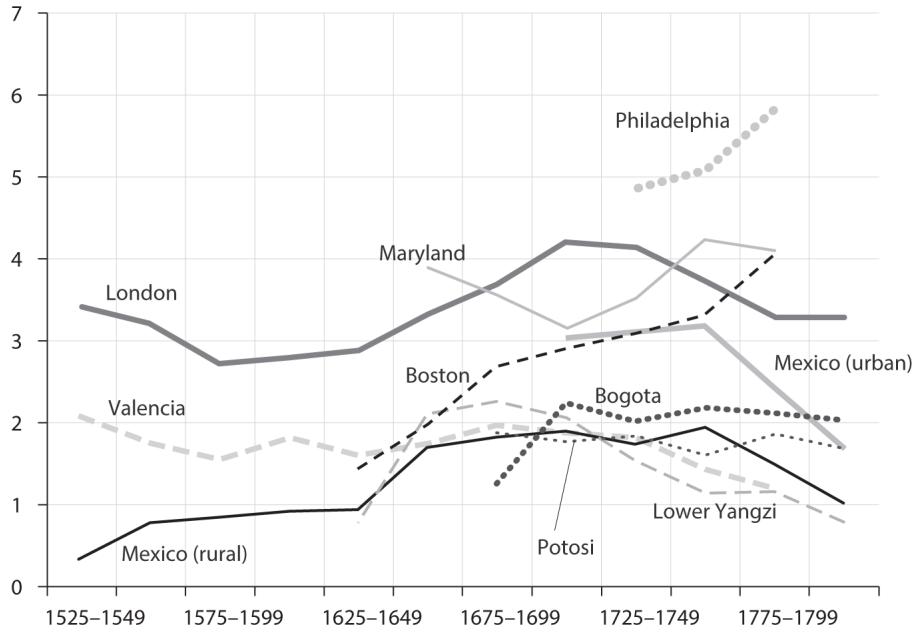


FIGURE 10.2. British living standards in comparison. The figure shows welfare ratios based on twenty-five-year averages for select locations in the Old and New Worlds. *Source:* Allen, Murphy, and Schneider 2012.

To entice people to migrate from Great Britain, colonial American wages obviously needed to be sufficiently high, and the data suggest that this was the case. Both in terms of nominal wages and welfare ratios, available evidence suggests that standards of living for unskilled laborers were similar in the colonies and in England.[27] However, data on emigration rates suggest that the number of people leaving the British Isles fell from approximately seven thousand per year in the early part of the seventeenth century to only three thousand per year by the century's end.[28]

Beyond high wages, the attraction of having the right to vote was another factor that was used to entice migrants to North America—high wages and political rights were complementary enticements. The political scientist Elena Nikolova and the economist Roger Congleton have each made this claim, and Nikolova has provided statistical evidence to support

it.[29] While seventeenth-century conditions pushed in favor of a very broad manhood suffrage, two eighteenth-century developments led to some backtracking. The first of these involved pressure from British royal authorities to regulate the suffrage. The second was that in the southern colonies, as the number of African slaves arriving increased dramatically, there was less incentive for elites to offer the suffrage to poor whites because they had less need for their labor.[30] The restrictions imposed on the suffrage in Virginia were indeed more significant than those imposed in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, on average about three-quarters of free adult males could vote, and voting rates in individual towns ranged from 50 to 90 percent. In Essex County, Virginia, at around the same time an average of 54 percent of males voted.[31] So the white male suffrage was narrower in Virginia, though not dramatically so.

Origins of American Slavery

The story of democracy in America is sometimes told in a way that is divorced from the history of slavery. The factors leading to democracy are considered on their own, and the same is done for slavery. But if we dig deeper we can see that the same underlying factor of labor scarcity contributed both to the granting of political rights to whites and to the enslavement of Africans. I make no claim here to be the first scholar to examine the links between American slavery and American freedom, as Edmund Morgan referred to it in the title of his 1975 book.[32] What I want to instead suggest is that the foundations of both democracy and slavery in America fit with a broader theme that I have emphasized: the importance of land abundance (and consequent labor scarcity) and exit options.

To consider this argument we need to first take a short detour through the theory of labor coercion as presented by several economists. In 1970, an economist named Evsey Domar wrote an article titled "The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom" that neatly encapsulated an argument that some historians had made: a condition of labor scarcity creates incentives for those who own land to develop coercive labor arrangements.[33] In a nutshell, if we imagine a world where land and labor are the two factors of production, then if land is sufficiently abundant relative to labor, controlling a lot of land on its own will not be the route to wealth—you need to instead find a way to control people. Historians of precolonial Africa have often suggested that in an environment of land abundance, slavery naturally arose as an institution because controlling people was so valuable. But there's a problem here. As we saw in chapters 2 and 3, it has also been argued by historians of precolonial Africa that land abundance led to early democracy. As long as people could move elsewhere, or so the story goes, then ruling in a coercive way was not feasible.

The question of when labor scarcity leads to coercion and when it instead leads to freedom has been answered by Daron Acemoglu and Alexander Wolitsky, two economists who present a theoretical model that expands upon Domar's original insight.[34] As Domar suggested, labor scarcity can lead to the development of more coercive labor arrangements because labor is more valuable. However, as labor scarcity increases, it also

means that anyone forced by you to work may find that escape options elsewhere become more appealing. The final outcome depends on which one of the above two outcomes dominates—people who get enslaved are those who do not have a good "outside option."

Let us return to the context of the Chesapeake colonies in North America in the late seventeenth century. Many British migrants to the Chesapeake came under indentured servant contracts. Some of these arrangements were purely voluntary and others less so, as individuals might be swooped up from the streets of London, sold out of orphanages to eager recruiters, or otherwise shipped off against their will. In some cases, the word "slave" was even used to refer to these individuals.[35] So, on August 7, 1660, the employer of a servant named Ann Parker stood accused in Middlesex County Court in London of illegally selling her "for a slave to Virginia." By the time Ann Parker was sold, Parliament had enacted punitive statutes against this practice, but those who were picked up on the streets of London and shipped to Virginia in earlier decades had no such legal protection, nor would Africans receive it until much, much later.[36]

The early days of forced shipment of English to Virginia sounds like it would have been an environment ripe for servitude once they got there. In fact, it did not always work that way. Once they finished their period of indenture, many English migrants established farms of their own. This exit option must have been facilitated by the fact that they looked like Virginia's existing British colonists, and they also sounded like them. They would have also shared a host of other cultural commonalities. In other words, they had a good outside option.

Now consider the case of Africans in Virginia, Maryland, and the other British colonies in North America who began arriving in 1619. The earliest African arrivals to Virginia and Maryland came in a variety of situations. Some were free and remained so, some were indentured under term contracts analogous to those of many white migrants, and some came entirely unfree.[37] Outside options also mattered for Africans, and for several obvious reasons they were much worse than those for white migrants. Africans looked different than English people, they most often would not have arrived speaking English, or being aware of English cultural practices, and there is plenty of evidence that people in Elizabethan and

Jacobean England associated dark skin with inferiority or other negative qualities.[38] Outside options for Africans were remote to nonexistent.

The sustainability of slavery in colonies like Virginia and Maryland depended on Africans not being able to escape and find labor elsewhere. For slave owners it of course helped that they had the law on their side. This law evolved quickly to define exactly what a "slave" was, there having been no prior juridical definition of the term. Africans were now to be slaves whereas kidnapped British boys were bound by "the custom of the country," meaning that eventual release could be expected.[39]

We can now see how an environment of land abundance and labor scarcity led simultaneously to greater political rights for white migrants and to enslavement for Africans. But to understand slavery's expansion we need to consider a further factor: the rise of tobacco. It was the dramatic increase in British demand for tobacco that would lead to an equally dramatic expansion of slavery in Maryland and Virginia.[40]

John Rolfe, the future husband of Pocahontas, is by tradition thought to have been the first white settler to successfully cultivate tobacco in Virginia. He did so with a strain from Trinidad that was both sweeter and higher in nicotine than local varieties grown by Native Americans. Rolfe exported his first crop to Great Britain in 1612, and the new crop was very warmly received.

From an initial low base, British imports of colonial tobacco steadily increased throughout the seventeenth century. Those in England who considered themselves expert on the subject debated whether smoking tobacco had any health benefits. Many advocated tobacco's medicinal benefits, but King James I took a different view. In a pamphlet published in 1604, he described tobacco smoke as

> a custome lothsome to the eye, hatefull to the Nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, neerest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse.[41]

There was a substantial increase in British tobacco imports in the 1660s, and it is at this point that the story takes an odd turn. During the Great

Plague of 1665 in London, the idea became widespread that smoking tobacco would protect an individual from the disease. Even schoolchildren were ordered to smoke, and in one oft-repeated story that is perhaps apocryphal, a boy at Eton College was whipped for *not* smoking. All this would have further increased demand for Virginian tobacco. Tobacco being a highly addictive product, any temporary spike in consumption could be expected to have long-lasting effects.

The case of the colony of Georgia provides us with a final example of how land abundance and labor scarcity produced American slavery.[42] Georgia was the last of the thirteen British colonies in mainland North America to be established. This took place through a royal charter granted in 1732. The men who established Georgia took the surprising initial step of banning the use of African slaves in the colony. The stated motivation was that the colony was to be settled by poor individuals from England who sought a better life. Reliance on African slaves would only reduce the industriousness of these people. Moral concerns about whether it was actually acceptable to treat Africans in this manner do not seem to have entered into the picture. The outlawing of slavery was combined with a pattern of land tenure that was intended to maintain a high labor-to-land ratio. Land grants to individual settlers were limited to fifty acres.

The prohibition of slavery in Georgia did not last very long. By 1735 a group of individual landowners emerged known as the "malcontents." Using cold financial logic, they argued that even though the price of an indentured servant from England was cheaper than that for an African slave, use of slaves made more economic sense. They thought that slaves were more used to working in agriculture and in this particular climate. Slaves also had lower costs of subsistence. Finally, the value of an indentured servant depreciated more quickly, not only because their contract might run out but also because English indentured servants tended to die at a much faster rate than African slaves.

By the summer of 1750 the trustees who had hoped to make Georgia a free colony gave up their effort—settlers were free to use African slaves.

Developments Elsewhere in the Americas

If land abundance had starkly different effects for Europeans and Africans in North America's British colonies, we should also ask what happened to the south in the Spanish domains and to the north in New France. Here as well we will see that both the natural environment and legacies of previous states left a mark.

Latin America in Comparison

The bargaining position of European settlers in Spanish America was fundamentally weaker than it was in the British colonies; as a result, there was no comparable story of extensive political rights being granted. In England at the time of colonization wages were high and rising while in Spain at the same time they were low and stagnant, so there was less need to offer political rights to attract ordinary Spanish migrants. We can show this by comparing subsistence ratios calculated by Robert Allen and his colleagues.[43] A subsistence ratio of one means that the wage of an unskilled worker is just sufficient for providing a family's basic caloric needs. At the outset of the seventeenth century the subsistence ratio for unskilled workers in London was just under three whereas in Valencia in Spain it was less than two. During the course of the century the London subsistence ratio rose to more than four whereas in Valencia it stagnated.

The other major difference between North and South America was the abundance and organization of "native" labor.[44] There is considerable debate about population densities in the Americas before 1492. Recent archaeologically based estimates suggest that the part of North America excluding Mesoamerica had a population of between one and six million people.[45] In South America the Inka Empire alone is estimated to have had ten to twelve million people.[46] In Mesoamerica the Aztec Empire alone is estimated to have had three to four million people.[47] To sustain these high populations, in Mesoamerica and South America people practiced a settled, intensive form of agriculture, whereas the inhabitants of the Eastern Woodlands were mobile and used the land extensively. When conquering the Inkas, the Spanish could simply dispense with the top level of rulers

while, at least at first, maintaining the underlying bureaucracy. Any attempt to do something similar with the Huron or the Iroquois would have simply resulted in them melting off into the forest. Once again, inheriting a bureaucratic state and practices pushed things away from democracy.

Even after the introduction of European diseases decimated native populations, there remained substantially more indigenous people south of the Rio Grande than to the north of it. Early Spanish colonizers therefore focused on creating institutions of forced labor, such as the *encomienda* system and later the *repartimiento*. In some cases, these efforts were facilitated not just by the presence of the native population but also by the inheritance of forced labor institutions created by indigenous rulers. So, in Peru under Spanish control, Spanish colonists used the *mita* system by which local elites had been obliged to furnish labor from individual *ayllu* communities for projects of the Inka rulers.[48] Had the conquest and settlement of North America occurred substantially earlier, when Mississippian societies were still flourishing, it is possible that colonizers might have made similar use of native populations and institutions north of the Rio Grande, but this was not to be the case.

The Case of New France

New France provides us with another opportunity to assess the effect of conditions in the New World on governance. Like a number of the British colonies in North America, French settlement was originally organized by a private company. Also, as in British North America, the state ended up taking things over directly given slack performance and an inadequate number of settlers. The prime difference was that while landholding in British North America was characterized by freeholders on small farms, most French settlers in North America became tenants on tracts of land owned by local notables.[49]

If the French had succeeded in replicating their home institutions of the time in New France, then this would have looked fairly bureaucratic, and on a superficial level this is precisely what happened. When New France was made a royal province in 1663, there was on paper a bureaucratic chain of command that stretched all the way from the French king down to the lowest-level colonial official. But the same realities that made assemblies

an inevitable feature of governance in the British colonies pushed in the same direction in New France, albeit to a more limited extent.

As early as 1647, the king of France had agreed that the inhabitants of the three towns of Québec, Montréal, and Trois-Rivières should be allowed to elect representatives, called syndics, who would attend meetings of the governing council. This council otherwise consisted only of officials appointed by the king. The rationale for this development appears to have been the same that we have seen on many other occasions: lacking much means of coercion, the only way to govern the local population was to seek their assistance.[50]

The tradition of popular representation continued after New France became a royal colony in 1663. In this instance, it occurred through popular assemblies convened by the governor of the province and the intendant, who was the other most senior royal official. Between 1672 and 1700 seventeen of these assemblies were held, and they do not appear to have only been for show. On at least one occasion, the governor ended up enacting legislation that went in a direction contrary to what he had initially proposed.

The Arrival of Modern Democracy in the United States

Though conditions in British North America favored a consensual mode of governance, this was not yet modern democracy. It is true that there was a broad suffrage, as in modern democracy, and this was a major advance on what was taking place in England. But many other features of governance in the town assemblies and colonial legislatures hearkened back to practices of early democracy that we have seen in a great many human societies. It was the Constitution of 1787 that would complete the transition.

To see examples of early democracy in action in British North America, consider the following examples. In the colonies, representatives could often be bound by mandates, instructions, and other non-electoral devices. In England such practices had long since disappeared. In the colonies members of legislatures were often elected annually. In Great Britain after the Septennial Act of 1715, members of Parliament only needed to face the electorate infrequently. In the colonies and under the Articles of Confederation substantial prerogatives were reserved for local and state governments.[51] Like in early democracy, there were also substantial opportunities for those who disagreed with a decision to simply opt out of it.

What the Federalists did was put the United States firmly on the track of modern democracy instead of early democracy. One view is that the constraints posed on democracy through the Constitution were intellectually motivated. Classical scholars, such as Polybius, had argued for a "mixed constitution" that blended democratic, aristocratic, and monarchical elements, and his influence on the U.S. Founding Fathers was clear.[52] The opposite view, staked out most famously by Charles Beard in 1913, is that this was a movement driven primarily by economic interest. A group of those with property and commercial interests sought a set of institutions that would defend their position.[53] While Beard was subsequently criticized for overreaching, events in the newly independent United States during the 1780s do give us examples where those who would become the backbone of the Federalist movement inveighed against measures to assist debtors. These included outright debt cancellation as well as the issuance of paper money.[54]

Representatives Were No Longer Bound by Mandates

The Constitution negotiated in Philadelphia made no reference to "mandates" or "instructions" that citizens might use to bind their representatives. As such, these practices had no legal basis even though it had been the practice in a number of colonial legislatures to use mandates or instructions.[55] The Federalists argued that the practice of mandates destroyed any possibility for deliberation between representatives. Also, mandates would tend to be used when the passions of the people were most inflamed. Anti-federalists saw mandates as a necessary check on the abuse of power. Though mandates were not included in the Constitution, there was discussion of them during the drafting of the Bill of Rights. Anti-federalists like Elbridge Gerry advocated incorporating mandates as part of the First Amendment. The right to free speech should include speech that would bind representatives. The Federalist majority in the House of Representatives rejected this proposal.

The United States was not the only country to take a decisive move away from mandates at this time. In France in meetings of the Estates General it was common for constituencies to bind their deputies with strict instructions. As we saw in chapter 5, attempts by monarchs to have deputies given full powers proved largely ineffectual. In 1789 the Estates General had not met since 1614 though assemblies in some provinces had continued to meet. As part of the process each district or *baillage* that sent a representative to the Estates of 1789 composed a *cahiers de doléances*. These books were meant to express grievances and requests for reform, but they were not instructions or mandates, and one of the first decisions taken by the French revolutionaries in July 1789 was to abolish mandates.

The decision of the Estates General of 1789, and of subsequent representative bodies, to renounce the idea of mandates or instructions met with majority, but far from total, support. For the Abbé de Sieyès, the idea that an individual constituency could bind their representative with a mandate was fundamentally incompatible with the idea that the deputy should have the national interest first in mind. For others, the use of mandates was critical for ensuring that it was the people who actually governed. The most outspoken supporter of the continued use of mandates was Jean-François Varlet, a member of the group known as the *enragés*.

This group spoke for the Parisian lower classes known as the sans-culottes. Varlet saw the importance of mandates in the following terms:

> In a country where the people are everything, the first act of sovereignty is to elect, the second is to give powers and mandates to those who are elected.[56]

Was the abandonment of mandates under modern democracy a good thing for the average citizen? We generally take their absence today for granted, but there have been examples on both the right and left where people have proposed bringing them back. If we think about this in abstract terms, the advantage of a mandate is that it does not matter whom you choose as a representative; the disadvantage is that it makes it harder for representatives to respond to unforeseen circumstances or new events, even in cases where representatives know that the people who sent them would have preferred a different choice. A system without mandates like this, where deviation is possible, will be more preferable the greater the certainty that a representative shares their views and the greater the ability of the public to learn about the true state of affairs.

Does the above abstract framework help us understand why and when mandates were abandoned? I think not. Whether we are talking about a British monarch in 1339, American Federalists in 1787, or French Revolutionaries in 1789, the abandonment of mandates can best be understood as a struggle between a center and localities with the center succeeding in imposing its will. It was the triumph of modern democracy over early democracy.

Elections Became Less Frequent

No longer bound by mandates or instructions, under the Constitution representatives could also enjoy longer intervals between facing voters at the ballot box. Today the Anti-federalist idea that elections should be held annually seems odd and unrealistic. In federal and state elections today, representatives and executives are chosen for terms ranging from two to six years. But to put this into perspective, we need to remember that the system

the Anti-federalists sought was simply that which had prevailed in most of the colonial legislatures.

We can get a sense of electoral precedent by looking at the constitutions of the original thirteen state legislatures.[57] Eight of these were adopted in 1776, three were adopted in the ensuing three years, and two further states chose to maintain existing charters from the colonial era. In all but three legislatures the term of office for the lower house was one year. In two of the remaining cases the term was only six months. Only in South Carolina was the term of office even as long as two years.

Now consider the terms of office adopted for the upper house in the thirteen original state constitutions. The way in which most colonial legislatures evolved was to have an upper house that was appointed either by company directors or by the Crown, paired with an elected lower house. In the newly independent United States these upper houses (called either senates or legislative councils) would now be elected. Of the eleven states that had upper chambers, six chose to also give their upper house legislators terms of only one year. One further state gave its upper house a term of two years; one state gave it a term of three years, and two further states gave their upper houses a term of four years. Finally, one state (Maryland) gave its upper house a term of five years.

The above evidence shows just how much the Constitution of 1787 deviated from existing practice. For the House of Representatives, the framers went against the norm of annual elections and instead adopted a two-year precedent set by only one state. For the Senate, the framers adopted a term of office that was a full five years longer than that of the majority of states.

As one would expect, the debate about electoral terms closely mirrored that on mandates. Annual elections would ensure a close link between the people and their representatives while longer electoral terms could provide useful distance. The Anti-federalist Elbridge Gerry took the former view, suggesting that if annual elections were dispensed with, then tyranny would soon arise. Other speakers remarked that the Septennial Act had placed undue distance between constituents and representatives in Great Britain. Therefore, this was not an example to be followed.[58]

In laying out the Federalist position James Madison took a very different view. He argued that in an extensive republic it would take time for legislators to learn about the interests of states other than their own. He argued further that instability had always been the problem of republics. For elections to the Senate, Madison went even further. William L. Pierce had argued in favor of a three-year term, and he did this on the basis of the fact that the Septennial Act in England—which had lengthened the parliamentary term from three to seven years—had caused "great mischiefs." Madison initially argued for a seven-year term for the Senate.[59]

The Center Gained the Power to Tax and Wage War

Prior to 1787 joint ventures between the American colonies had resembled the ad hoc financial arrangements found in so many other early democracies. The center negotiated contributions from individual entities, but it had little coercive authority. This was the way that state finance was organized in the Dutch Republic. The one exception to this was that during the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress gave itself the power to issue a paper currency that came to be known as the Continental. Backed by nothing more than "anticipated" tax revenues, the value of the currency quickly depreciated, leading to the creation of the popular phrase "not worth a Continental." The underlying problem was that the Continental Congress had no way of generating these tax revenues on its own.

Just as mandates and annual elections seem unnatural to us today, the idea that the Constitution would not give the federal government substantial power to tax seems equally implausible. Strong central state power is a core feature of modern democracy. But from the standpoint of 1787, this was not a natural or obvious outcome. The Anti-federalists, historical examples in hand, argued that giving the federal government the power to levy taxes would risk resulting in tyranny. That is not what happened in the end, but to see the depth of these anxieties we need to recognize that they persisted well after 1787.

Early Critics of Modern Democracy

We know that the Constitution suffered many criticisms for augmenting central power while loosening the grip that the people would have on their representatives. Some felt that their worst fears had materialized. There was a concern that while the Constitution held representatives at a distance from their constituents, financial interests in New York and Philadelphia would have no problem influencing Congress. John Taylor, a Virginia politician who was a close friend of Thomas Jefferson, described the problem in the following terms. Writing in 1794, he distinguished between the "5,000,000," which was thought to be the population of the United States at this time, and the "5,000," the moneyed elite that would have great influence. In U.S. political debates today, we would refer to this group as the top 0.1 percent.

> Only the one thousandth part of the nation retains in *reality* a political existence. Political life is enjoyed by the power which influences the Legislature. This influence is possessed by the 5000—and the 5,000,000 are only allowed once in two years, a kind of political spasm, and after one day's mockery of importance, sink again into its lethargy. A *nominal election* of, and an *irresistible influence* over the Legislature, are things of real difference.[60]

This statement—written at the dawn of modern representative democracy—illustrates precisely why this form of government is so frustrating. Elections allow for mass participation, but political participation then becomes episodic. I will return to Taylor's observations in chapter 12, asking what pertinence they have for thinking about democracy in the United States today.

Connecting Citizens with a Distant State

The Constitution of 1787 on its own did not assure the survival of democracy in America. It even posed a problem to the extent that citizens were now governed by a very distant state. Some citizens in the Early Republic saw the problem: keeping citizens connected with a distant state would require substantial effort and investment. One such investment was subsidizing the circulation of newspapers so that people could inform themselves.

The writers of the Federalist Papers were slow to recognize the importance of keeping the public connected with government and therefore trustful of it. In his contributions to the Federalist Papers, James Madison did not write very extensively about public opinion, nor did John Jay or Alexander Hamilton. The phrase "public opinion" appears in the Federalist Papers only five times and on each occasion only in passing. After 1789, Alexander Hamilton argued for a submissive role for the public. Public opinion was important to the extent that citizens should decide whether they had confidence in government, but the citizenry was not to play a more active role.[61]

In his writings after 1789, James Madison took a different view.[62] For him, in a republic, public opinion should go beyond simply deciding whether one had confidence in government. Members of the public needed to have a way of actively informing themselves. This raised two questions: What mechanism would the public use to inform itself? How could the public inform itself in such a large republic where events often took place at a great distance? In Federalist 10, Madison had written of the virtues of a large republic. In his essay titled "Public Opinion," written in December 1791, he now spoke of the constraints posed by large size. Madison argued that promoting the circulation of newspapers would be one way to address the constraint of scale.

> The larger a country, the less easy for its real opinion to be ascertained, and the less difficult to be counterfeited; when ascertained or presumed, the more respectable it is in the eyes of individuals. This is favorable to the authority of government. For the same reason, the more extensive a

country, the more insignificant is each individual in his own eyes. This may be unfavorable to liberty.

Whatever facilitates a general intercourse of sentiments, as good roads, domestic commerce, a free press, and particularly a *circulation of newspapers through the entire body of the people*, and *Representatives going from, and returning among every part of them*, is equivalent to a contraction of territorial limits, and is favorable to liberty, where these may be too extensive.[63]

James Madison's essay appeared as the United States Congress was debating the passage of a Postal Service Act. In congressional debate the question arose whether the postal system ought to be used to subsidize the delivery of newspapers. In countries like the United Kingdom, the general rule was to use the postal service to raise revenue, not to subsidize shipments. In the United States, congressional sentiment weighed in favor of subsidizing newspapers so that the public could better inform itself. But the question then arose of *which* newspapers should be subsidized. Perhaps there should be an authorized list, or even a single newspaper? Elbridge Gerry, who had been a prominent Anti-federalist, argued forcefully against this option because he feared it would lead to the creation of a "court gazette." Through the Postal Service Act of 1792, the Congress instead opted for the opposite strategy. There would be a subsidy whereby any newspaper could be delivered virtually anywhere in the territory for the cost of one penny.[64]

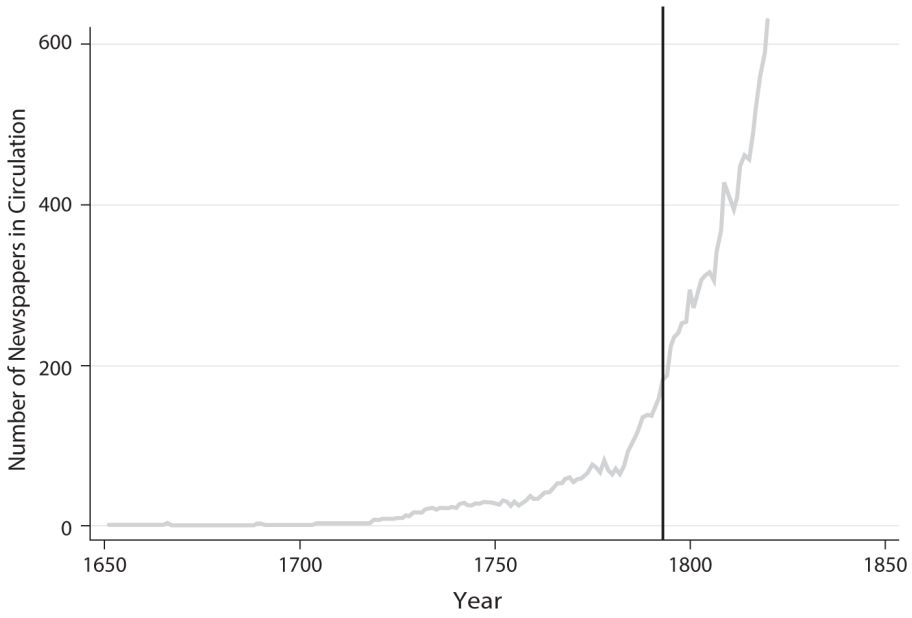


FIGURE 10.3. Newspapers in the Early Republic. Estimated number of newspapers in circulation in each year. The estimate is based on the Library of Congress Chronicling America: America's Historic Newspapers Database.

The Postal Service Act of 1792 helped propel a substantial expansion in newspaper circulation. We can trace the growth of U.S. newspaper circulation using data from a compilation of early American newspapers produced by the Library of Congress. By recording the initial and final dates of publication for each newspaper, we can count the number of newspapers in circulation in each year between 1750 and 1820. The data are shown in Figure 10.3. In this figure the vertical line shows the date at which the Postal Service Act of 1792 took effect. It is clear from this evidence that the Early Republic witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of newspapers in circulation. At the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783 there were 75 newspapers in circulation. By 1820 this number had increased nearly tenfold to 629.

To get a full picture of the public's access to news, we ought to also consider the total number of copies printed. As one might expect, it is more difficult to track the number of copies than the number of newspapers, but there are some existing estimates of numbers of copies for select years.[65] There is, in fact a tight correlation between the number of copies printed in a given year and the number of newspapers in circulation. So, we can use the number of newspapers as a proxy for the total number of copies.

The next question is how much the Postal Service Act contributed to this process of expansion. It is clear from Figure 10.3 that there was a dramatic expansion in the number of newspapers in circulation after 1792. But there was also an expansion prior to that date. This process seems to have begun at the end of the War of Independence.

We can see clearer evidence of the impact of the Postal Service Act by looking at the geographic distribution of newspapers. Of the 148 newspapers in print on the eve of the passage of the Postal Service Act, the vast majority were published in large coastal cities. Some observers feared that the absence of news availability in inland areas was contributing to turbulent events, such as Shays' Rebellion, which took place in western Massachusetts. By 1800, eight years after the Postal Service Act's passage, the new newspapers that appeared were very often in inland areas that previously had had only distant access to news. We see further evidence for the importance of newspapers in the United States soon after the Postal Service Act of 1792 with the following comment from the French observer Jean-Esprit Bonnet: "They arrive in the most far off places once a week; secondary towns have them two days a week; and large cities have them morning, noon, and night."[66]

The ability to ship newspapers for a penny helped keep citizens in the Early Republic informed about their government. But in some cases, it also helped keep people misinformed. Even before the divisive election of 1800, vituperative, fake news had played a prominent role in American politics. In 1788, amid the debate over the ratification of the Constitution, Ben Franklin wrote a letter to the editors of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in which he pretended to take the view of a European observer who, laid up by gout, had decided to amuse himself by reading a packet of newspapers from the state of Pennsylvania. The observer described his impression of American politics in a way that, with the switch of a few labels, could easily fit with American politics in our current polarized era.

> For I learn from those Papers, that your state is divided into Parties, that each Party ascribes all the public Operations of the other to vicious Motives; that they do not even suspect one another of the Smallest Degree of Honesty; that the antifederalists are such, merely from the

> Fear of losing Power, Places, or Emoluments, which they have in Possession or in Expectation; that the Federalists are a set of *conspirators*, who aim at establishing a Tyranny over the Persons and Property of their Countrymen, and to live in Splendor on the Plunder of the People.[67]

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* never published Franklin's letter, but it still speaks volumes about the era. And nasty partisanship wasn't the only aspect of the ratification debate. There were also instances of direct lies. Anti-federalists spread published rumors that John Jay himself had become an opponent of the Constitution. Federalists published a fake letter from Daniel Shays, the leader of Shays' Rebellion, urging Anti-federalists to inflame frontier opinion by speaking of aristocracy, oligarchy, and monarchy.[68]

If the new penny newspapers could propagate fiction as easily as the truth, then how can we claim that their existence helped solidify democracy? Shouldn't we think that the effect was in fact the opposite much as some think of the effect of social media today? To answer these two questions, we need to first ask another: the penny newspapers compared to what else? Compared to a world where there are multiple newspapers, none of which engage in muckraking or slander, the performance of the penny press might seem subpar. But recall that while James Madison wrote in general terms about public opinion, people like Elbridge Gerry had a more specific fear in mind: the idea that the Federalist administration would establish something akin to a "court gazette" and that this would be the sole source that many people would have about the affairs of government. Under these circumstances, it might be far better to have access to multiple news sources even if they were biased; even biased news sources could provide some information.[69] Had the United States gone down the road of having a court gazette, American democracy would have been worse off.

Conclusion: The Invention of Modern Democracy

We have seen that two contradictory impulses conditioned the development of modern democracy in the United States. The first was an initial environment of land abundance and labor scarcity that made consensual governance with a broad suffrage necessary, but this only applied to free white males. The second was an effort by the framers of the U.S. Constitution to dispense with certain features of early democracy and to create greater distance between representatives and the public.

During the colonial period, the same forces that had pushed toward consensual governance for Native Americans did the same for European colonists. Land abundance, ease of exit, and the absence of coercive state power all made consensual governance a necessity. Colonial assemblies emerged to help levy taxes and to administer justice. A broad manhood suffrage arose not because of some concrete plan, project, or philosophy but for the simple reason that there were few initial differences among colonists upon which to base a more restrictive system. The suffrage also became a means of attracting people. These forces pushed in the direction of democracy as long as you were a European settler. In an environment of labor scarcity, the alternative strategy was to rely on forced laborers who could be easily distinguished from the European population and who had no good exit option. In this case, the result was chattel slavery for Africans. Early democracy and slavery had the same underlying origins.

The impulse provided by the framers of the Constitution was like that which monarchs had imposed in England but without going as far. As in England, representatives after 1787 could no longer be bound by mandates, they were not constrained by annual elections, and the central government had considerable authority to tax and use armed force. But there were three fundamental ways in which the events of 1787 produced a very different outcome from the English one.

The first was that necessary compromise in Philadelphia ensured relatively short terms for the House of Representatives, even if elections were not held annually. Bicameralism facilitated this compromise as elections to the House ended up being nearly as frequent as the annual elections that Elbridge Gerry sought while elections to the Senate ended up

being closer to the term of seven years that James Madison thought appropriate and that applied in England from 1716.

The second was that the suffrage for men in the United States continued to be a very broad one. In Great Britain, the forty-shilling freeholder rule ensured that the percentage of adult males who could vote was in the single digits. When it was enacted in 1429 this rule represented an expansion of the suffrage compared to the elections that preceded. But no further modification would be made for more than four centuries until the Great Reform Act of 1832. In the British colonies of North America application of the same rule resulted in a much different outcome, allowing a majority of adult males to vote. Though the English Levellers were the first to propose a broad manhood suffrage, their idea would first be implemented in America.

The final difference was that unlike other countries that eventually made the transition, modern democracy in the United States would for very long remain incomplete—it would not be for three hundred and fifty years after 1619 that African Americans would enjoy the same voting rights as others. This was not a conquest that occurred as a result of a single watershed moment; it was instead the result of what some scholars have called a long and unsteady march.[70] Ultimately, the achievement of the vote by African Americans points to another important property of modern democracy: precisely because it espouses to make political participation universal, within this form of government the excluded have a powerful argument for demanding the same rights as others. Early democracy lacked this feature.

11

The Spread of Modern Democracy

STARTING FROM ITS ANGLO-AMERICAN beginnings, modern democracy spread first to other lands inhabited by Europeans, and then to further areas as peoples freed themselves from European colonial rule. The spread of modern democracy is a striking phenomenon. What is equally striking is that by the late twentieth century, even governments in states that do not seem democratic said they were democratic. They called themselves People's Republics, Socialist Republics, or even Democratic People's Republics, as in the case of North Korea today. We can now consider whether the same factors that we have seen in the first ten chapters can help explain the global spread of democracy. Modern democracy has been more likely to take root in places where there is a legacy of state weakness and where rulers need their people. Prior traditions of collective governance have also mattered.

Charting the Spread of Democracy

We can begin thinking about the global spread of modern democracy with a chart that shows the whole development in one picture. Over the last few decades social scientists have produced numerous quantitative measures of democracy. Some authors focus on a minimalist definition of democracy based on the presence of competitive elections with a broad suffrage in which incumbent parties stand a chance of losing.[1] An alternative approach is to adopt a subjective measure of democracy, such as that comprised in the Polity index.[2] Here, experts subjectively code a country based on a series of individual components. These are then added up, and if the score passes a certain threshold, a country is called a democracy.

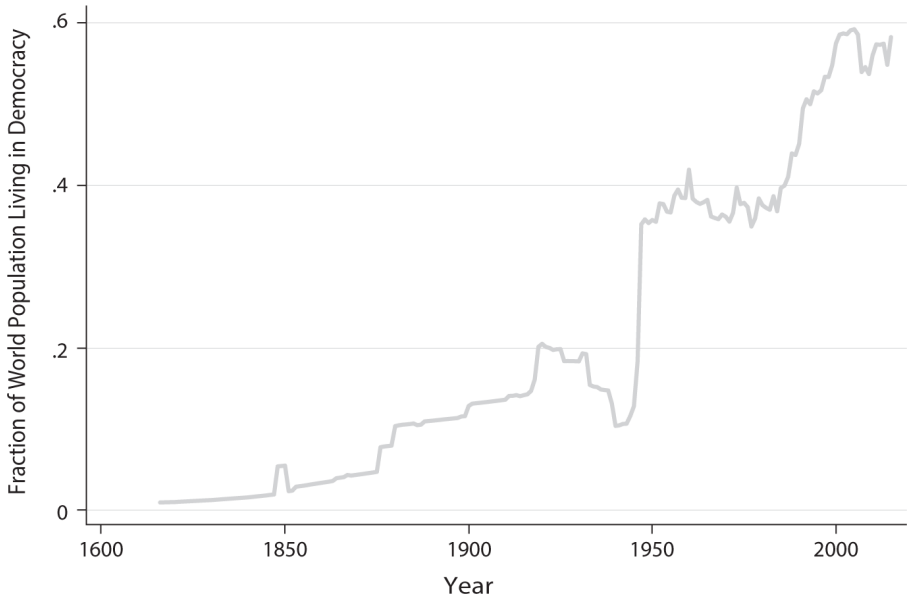


FIGURE 11.1. The rise of modern democracy. Calculated and presented by Our World in Data based on data from the Polity IV database. Democracies here are those with a combined Polity score of six or higher.

Figure 11.1 shows the fraction of the world population living in a democracy, an autocracy, or a colony, based on the Polity index. Alternative ways of coding would show a similar story. There are three main democratizing moments to consider, and these correspond to the three "waves" of democratization observed by the political scientist Samuel Huntington.[3]

The first wave was a slow-moving one that commenced at the beginning of the nineteenth century and culminated after World War I.[4] It involved the slow movement of European states toward democracy, and I will spend the first part of the chapter examining this. One of the factors leading to democracy in Europe was something that we have encountered elsewhere in the book: in an environment of mass mobilization for war, rulers needed their people, and so universal conscription led to universal suffrage. I will also examine the expansion of the suffrage to women. In many ways, this was a more revolutionary development than was the achievement of universal suffrage for men.

The second wave of democratization occurred in the wake of World War II as European dictatorships reverted to democracy and as newly independent countries like India established democratic constitutions. We need to remember that prior to this date, while democracy was spreading in Europe, many people elsewhere were ruled from outside by Europeans in as undemocratic a fashion as possible. For this second wave I will concentrate on one main question: Why did democratic governance not emerge in China and Russia while it became firmly anchored in India? Long-run legacies of state development help explain the divergence. In China, a long history of state presence provided a ready means for the Chinese Communist Party to draw on certain aspects of the imperial legacy, such as household registration. Anyone who attempted to do the same thing in India would have had far less of a state legacy to draw upon.

The third of Huntington's three waves began with the democratization of the Iberian Peninsula in the mid-1970s, but what is most obvious from Figure 11.1 is the dramatic expansion in democracy after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.[5] In the third section of this chapter I will ask how it is that numerous African countries have become democracies since this date. According to just about any conventional political science theory, African countries should not be democracies today. They are too poor, too divided, and too unequal to sustain this form of governance. The actual outcome in a number of African states has been rather different. I will argue that this may be attributable both to traditions of early democracy and to the relative absence of a history of strong coercive states.

As we study Figure 11.1, we do need to also make sure not to fall into a trap. This would be to suggest that democracy started off in one place before expanding globally. This was true of modern democracy but not early democracy. As we have seen throughout this book, many peoples in many areas that Europeans colonized had their own forms of early democracy—it just happened that they got colonized by Europeans who then imposed non-democratic rule from afar. Were we able to chart this movement in full and adopt a broader definition of democracy we would conclude that the initial share of people living under some form of democracy actually started out quite high. It then fell subsequently as a result of colonization, only to rise again as colonies became independent. This is yet another reason to think of the decline and rise of democracy.

Democracy Comes to Europe

It is not hard to see why Europe provided a fertile terrain for the expansion of modern democracy. Early democracy had been a prominent feature of governance in many places in Europe; societies had what Roger Congleton calls the "king and council template" in which rule was shared between a monarch and some members of society.[6] It is true that there was some waning of this model in the two centuries before the French Revolution. Assemblies could prove obstinate in refusing taxation, and monarchs sometimes found other ways to achieve their goals. In France, after 1614 the Estates General was dormant, and in Prussia things went considerably further: the powers of the Estates of Brandenburg were removed entirely. But no other European ruler went as far as Prussia in this direction, and by 1789 the practice of assemblies was still well known.

The spread of democracy in Europe involved several successive developments. In those cases where they had weakened, representative assemblies were reinvigorated. In many cases these assemblies bore the same name as their medieval counterparts. Having a prior base to build on helps explain why this could happen. Subsequently, assemblies began to accumulate more power to the point where they became the central basis of government, and this too represented a return to medieval precedent. The final achievement of democracy involved the establishment of universal suffrage, including for women, and competitive elections. We need to ask why all this happened.

When people try to explain the spread of democracy in Europe, they almost invariably adopt an approach focused on this continent alone. They then ask how and why conditions in some European countries led them to advance more quickly on the democratic road, or in some cases to retreat from it. But we can also think about things in a different way by seeing whether European democratization can be understood in terms of the broad factors that favored democracy in other places at other times.

An Expanding Blaze of Ideas?

The simplest explanation for the arrival of democracy in Europe is that the American Revolution was based on a set of radical new ideas about political equality, and this proved to be a very powerful message. This was a fire that once lit spread into what one historian has recently called an "expanding blaze."[7] But there is a shortcoming to this story: for the vast majority of European states there was a long hiatus between the spread of American ideas and the adoption of universal suffrage. We could say the same thing with regard to the spread of French revolutionary ideas.

We saw in chapter 9 that the ideas of political equality of the American colonists had been seen in other places at other times. In the 1640s in England the Levellers and the Diggers had experimented with exactly the same ideas of a broad manhood suffrage. But by the time they got to the point of writing these ideas down, the Leveller leaders were imprisoned in the Tower of London. The environmental conditions of North America were much more amenable to seeing a broad suffrage be adopted. It may be that this needed to happen first before democratic practices could spread to Europe.

The second thing to realize about the spread of democracy in Europe is that compared to other "waves" of democracy, this was a very slow-moving one. The fall of the Berlin Wall triggered a substantial increase in the number of democracies within a few short years. But the effect of the American Revolution on Europe was much slower if we judge universal suffrage as the outcome. For most European states this process would take more than a century.

Did Europe Democratize Because It Grew Rich?

The most common explanation political scientists have offered for democracy's emergence is that it happens as countries grow rich. This could be for a number of different reasons. It could involve a direct effect of higher incomes if people demand more political rights as they rise out of poverty. It could involve a number of other effects for which income per capita is a proxy measure: as countries grow rich this often means improved communication and transport that allow people to mobilize. The transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy might have the same effect. Finally, higher per capita incomes might also mean that people are more

likely to be educated and therefore better able to resist the calls of false prophets and demagogues who would undermine democracy.

Economists and political scientists have spilled much ink trying to ascertain whether higher per capita income and the things with which it is associated really do drive democracy. Here I want to propose a simpler approach that will return to Seymour Martin Lipset's first work on this subject from 1959. Lipset compared democracies and dictatorships in Europe and Latin America by looking at income per capita, doctors per capita, telephones, motor vehicles, radios, and newspapers. He also looked at indicators of education and industrialization. The results showed substantially higher levels of development in stable democracies.

One question about Lipset's analysis is whether the best test of the theory is to examine levels of development in 1959. The alternative would be to look at levels of development at the time a country first democratized —or had a chance to democratize. For most European countries this happened long before 1959.

Take the case of France. In 1959 French GDP per capita was a little less than $10,000 in today's dollars.[8] There were many doctors, telephones, radios, newspapers, and motor vehicles. France was less developed than a country like the United States, but it was hardly impoverished. But France did not democratize in 1959—it first became a stable democracy some ninety years prior to that date at the outset of the Third Republic. In 1870 French income per capita was only $2,383 in today's dollars. That's about the same GDP per capita as Tanzania or Senegal today, and in France in 1870 there were of course no telephones, radios, or motor vehicles.

France in 1870 became a stable democracy in spite of being a poor developing country, and it was hardly unique in doing so. Among a set of thirteen western European countries, the average per capita income at which they democratized was a little over $3,000.[9] Four of the countries in this set were actually poorer than France when they democratized. Also, a number of these countries became stable democracies prior to the invention or diffusion of the technologies for communication and transport that many see as critical for democracy.

The bottom line from all of this is that at the time they democratized, many western European societies were quite poor, yet the great first wave

of democratization still happened. When we see European experience in this light, perhaps we should be less surprised that a number of poor countries today, particularly in Africa, have transitioned to democracy.

A Legacy of Weak States

To better understand why modern democracy spread to Europe, we should first return to the deep historical background that I considered in the previous chapters. This cannot explain the timing of European democratization, but it can explain why it did eventually happen.

By the turn of the eighteenth century, European state bureaucracies had grown in strength, but they were still relatively weak in world historical terms. Consider how the "land tax"—an important part of British revenues—was collected. One way to collect the land tax would have been to establish and train a bureaucracy that could then go out and assess land values and process payment. It is what other societies outside of Europe had been doing for millennia. But this isn't what happened in Great Britain. The British land tax was instead assessed and collected by local "commissioners" appointed by the Crown. These were generally local gentry members, no doubt substantial property holders themselves, who were nominated by individual MPs. One prominent historian of the land tax has observed that the Crown and the Ministry actually had very little control over these commissioners. They were unpaid individuals—generally men of substantial means—who did not depend upon the Crown financially, and the Crown had very little ability to monitor them.[10] This was not terribly different from the way the Anglo-Saxons had done things, and it led to the same political outcome: governing through consent was the only way to go.

It is true that Great Britain did make substantial progress in establishing centralized collection of two other types of tax: customs duties on imports and excise duties on common consumption goods. Here the number of officials administering these two taxes rose from 2,524 right after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to 7,114 at the end of the American War of Independence, and the amounts collected rose commensurately.[11] It also helps explain why people vociferously criticized the excise as something that would open the floodgates of tyranny.[12] Those who made such

comments would have agreed with the argument that I have been making throughout this book. What they did not anticipate was the way in which Parliament would be able to control the excise to avoid tyranny. This is another example that points to the importance of sequencing when it comes to state and democratic development.

What about Europe's "absolutist" states: were they not strong? In some historical work of the 1960s and 1970s it was common to learn of early modern Europe's absolutist states and how they evolved from more consensual medieval forms of governance. Subsequent work showed that with the notable exception of Prussia under the Hohenzollerns, even supposedly absolutist states still ended up having to work through assemblies in order to get things done. Some even wrote of a "myth of absolutism."[13]

Eighteenth-century France provides a vivid example of how old ideas about absolutism stretched too far. It is true that after 1614 French monarchs ceased calling the Estates General; it is also true that they tried to construct a bureaucracy based on a class of officials called intendants. But even monarchs like Louis XIV still found it necessary to bargain with their subjects. As just one example, a number of French provinces retained assemblies that played an important role in levying taxes. Julian Swann has demonstrated this extensively for the Estates General of Burgundy, which helped the Crown raise taxes and therefore also had a role in consenting to them.[14] These same Estates also provided loans to the French monarchs.[15] The Estates General of Burgundy was far from unique in playing this role.[16] All this suggests that outside of the Prussian case, European absolutism is better seen as an idea than as a description of a firmly anchored practice.

To sum things up, by the time that the American Revolution put the question of democracy firmly on the agenda, western Europe still had a set of relatively weak states where rulers felt compelled to rely on assemblies and other bodies to obtain consent for their actions. This was fertile ground for the development of modern democracy.

A Legacy of Assemblies and Voting

I have said throughout this book that early democracy is a human invention and not a specifically European one. But there were two ways in which

Europeans prior to 1800 did innovate. This was through the use of formalized elections and with the establishment of assemblies covering large geographic distances. The prior development of both of these technologies meant that by the time the American Revolution happened, part of the infrastructure for modern democracy was already in place. This was very unlike other regions—such as the Middle East—where early democracy existed at the local level but was never scaled up. In chapter 7 we saw how this mode of operation made it difficult to maintain democratic governance in an expanding polity. As the early Islamic Caliphate rapidly expanded to cover great distances, old patterns of face-to-face, consensual governance could no longer work. What was needed was a new means of operating, but that was hard to invent overnight.

In addition to their assembly tradition, by the time of the American Revolution, Europeans had also been practicing formalized voting for centuries. It just happened that this was much more common at the local level than at the national level. Within the Catholic Church, a large, sprawling organization, considerable efforts were made to elaborate a theory of voting and of majority and supermajority rule as the political scientist Melissa Schwartzberg has shown.[17] Within individual towns voting also took place, including in nominally absolutist countries like France.[18] Not surprisingly, nineteenth-century advocates of a broad suffrage often tried to hearken back to these early examples to support their cause.[19]

It is true that Europeans were not the only ones to develop the practice of voting and of voting by majority. During the Kamakura period in Japan (1185–1333) monastic groups governed themselves collectively, and they did so with a principle of majority rule.[20] But it is not clear that examples such as this had the same durability that they did in Europe.

The other way in which Europeans innovated was in developing an explicit theory of representation that was applied to governance over large territories. Some larger polities outside Europe did maintain councils, but the constraints of geographic scale were apparent, such as when Ashanti chroniclers in West Africa noted the physical obstacles to attending assemblies. Geographic obstacles were a burden in Europe too. Elsewhere I have noted that the frequency of meetings of assemblies was closely correlated with geographic scale.[21] This meant that assemblies could only

play a truly active role in governance, such as by managing spending, in relatively small polities. But geographic scale was less of an obstacle to having an assembly consent to taxation, since this occurred at less frequent intervals.[22] The most extreme example of this was the Fourth Lateran Council of 1213–15 where Pope Innocent III convened representatives from throughout Europe in an effort to gain consent for revenues.

Expanding the Suffrage: One Man, One Gun, One Vote

Historical precedents involving voting and assemblies help explain why modern democracy spread to Europe, but they cannot explain the timing of its adoption. While many factors may have played a role here, in what follows I want to investigate one in particular. Throughout this book, I have emphasized that democracy is more likely to emerge when rulers need their people. In the nineteenth century this dynamic reemerged. Interstate competition and technological changes, and in particular the development of railroads, made the mobilization of mass armies both necessary and possible.[23] This could best be done through universal conscription, and that could best be obtained if people had the right to vote.

Sweden provides an example of this phenomenon. Anxious about the prospect of becoming embroiled in a European war, in 1901 the Swedish government obtained passage of a law establishing universal conscription for all men. This would soon give Sweden's Social Democrats, a minority party, a new rallying cry, "one man, one gun, one vote." Just as ancient Athenians had thought it necessary to allow the *thetes* a greater political role because it was they who rowed the boats, this was the same argument some twenty-five centuries later. Hjalmar Branting, who would go on to be Sweden's first Social Democratic prime minister, went as far as to say that "the right to vote is Sweden's prime defense issue." Sweden adopted universal manhood suffrage in 1909, and there is little doubt that the conscription argument helped pave the way for this change.[24]

We can also consider more general European evidence on universal conscription and universal suffrage, separating out male and female suffrage.[25] Though there was no analogous slogan saying "one woman, one gun, one vote," it was the case that during the two world wars women took

on new roles, and some have argued that this bolstered their claims for equal voting rights.

To see the overall pattern of conscription and male universal suffrage in a set of twenty countries in Europe, consider the two lines in Figure 11.2. The solid line represents the fraction of a sample of countries that had a system of universal conscription in place.[26] The dotted line represents the fraction of countries in which there was universal manhood suffrage. These lines move so closely together that it suggests a strong relationship between the two.

While the two lines in Figure 11.2 follow an indisputable common trend, we need to dig a bit deeper to see what the actual relationship between the two is. One way to do this is to look at timing, based on the simple principle that for one thing to cause another thing, it needs to precede it. When we untangle the relationship between universal conscription and universal suffrage in this way, we see a very interesting result. Early adoption of universal conscription increases the likelihood that a government will subsequently adopt universal manhood suffrage. The reverse is less true. Say that a country adopts universal conscription but it does not yet have universal manhood suffrage. There is a 23 percent greater chance of adopting universal manhood suffrage in the next five years than would otherwise be the case.[27] Now consider the case where a country has already adopted universal suffrage but it has not yet adopted universal conscription. Here there is only a 4 percent greater chance of adopting universal conscription within the next five years.[28]

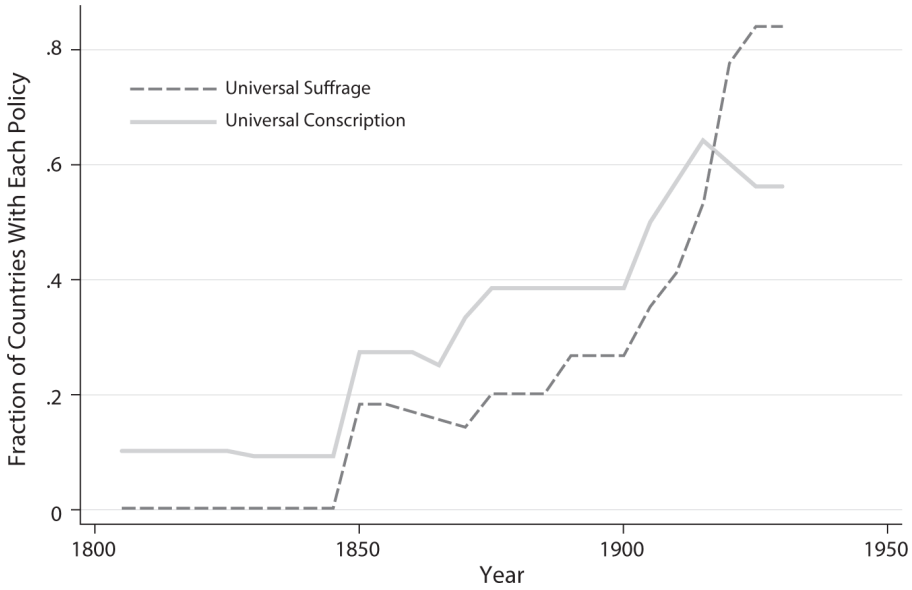


FIGURE 11.2. One man, one gun, one vote. The figure shows the fraction of a set of twenty countries by year that had universal and equal male suffrage and that had universal conscription. (See the text for sources.)

It appears, then, that adopted universal conscription faced pressures to subsequently adopt universal manhood suffrage. But if universal manhood suffrage arrived first, this did not increase the chance that universal conscription would also be adopted.

One question we might ask is had European countries not fought large-scale wars—including with conscription—prior to the nineteenth century? Yes, they had done so, but conscription prior to the nineteenth century was of a more limited sort that generally targeted people who were already down and out and who therefore had little leverage to demand the vote. The invention of the railroad changed all this as it became possible to mobilize (and feed) substantially larger armies than ever before. Armies numbering in the millions could now be mobilized, and they were best recruited through universal conscription.[29]

There was one European country where the one man, one gun, one vote principle did not apply, and that was autocratic Prussia. The Prussian government first began contemplating a system of universal conscription after the devastating losses it suffered against Napoléon and his French armies. The French ideas of the *levée en masse* and the citizen soldier provided a powerful example. We know for a fact that some Prussian councillors favored adopting the French model. In 1808 an advisor to the

Prussian Army's chief of staff proposed that generalized military service could only work if citizens were granted a free constitution, the franchise, and the ability to hold those in power to account. This advice was ignored by King Friedrich Wilhelm III. He chose to instead implement a more limited reform by banning some of the gruesome disciplinary punishments for which the Prussian Army was known.[30] As was the case in other autocracies, such as those in Warring States China, conscription in Prussia was enforced by bureaucracy rather than gaining compliance by granting political rights.

Voting Rights for Women

By 1900 a number of European countries could be reasonably called modern democracies because of the broad suffrage that they gave to men, but none of them had given rights to women. A half century later universal female suffrage was a reality in all countries but Switzerland. Ultimately, this should be seen as the most novel democratic development of the twentieth century. Men had participated in democratic politics in one way or another for millennia. But as we saw in chapter 2, women's direct political participation in early democracies (and autocracies) was a very uncommon thing. It would be too strong a conclusion to say that the invention of politics meant the exclusion of women, but the truth may not have been far from it.

In chapter 2 we saw that when women did enjoy political influence in early societies, this generally happened in polities with low levels of political centralization. When the highest level of governance was the local community, or even just the household, then female political influence was not uncommon. When higher-level governance existed, it was much less so. It is possible that the same phenomenon prevailed in Europe prior to the modern era. In a famous contribution published in 1891, Moisey Ostrogorski, the early Russian sociologist and political scientist, argued that within Europe, political power of women at the local level in "primitive and medieval communities" was extinguished by the establishment of higher-level governance. Looking at local communities, and in particular those with some communal forms of property, Ostrogorski provided examples of cases where women had played a prominent political role. As governance

shifted from spontaneous forms of association to a more structured and uniform rule, women lost what political role they had enjoyed.

There is evidence to support Ostrogorski's assertions about the early period, but we should also not fall into overly romanticized notions of early and abundant female power. Some twentieth-century historical work suggested that women played a powerful role in Anglo-Saxon society, only to lose prominence after the Norman conquest. More recent work suggests this picture was oversimplified because it was based on evidence only for elites. A more accurate picture would seem to be that ordinary women in later Anglo-Saxon England did have some influence, but in the early Anglo-Saxon period non-elite women were essentially property.[31]

In some senses the movement toward female universal suffrage began with the reestablishment of women's political rights at the local level. In England, as early as 1834 women who were taxpayers had the right to vote for and sit on the boards of guardians that administered the poor laws. English women would not gain the suffrage at the national level for almost a century after this point. In 1862 Sweden gave the right to vote in municipal elections to female heads of household who were taxpayers.[32] They would not gain full rights to vote in national elections for another sixty years.

Both the Swedish and the English cases suggest a link between a government's need for someone's resources (paid through taxes) and the granting of political rights. The next big question is whether female participation in the war efforts of the twentieth century hastened the arrival of female suffrage as it had done for men. Here the answer seems to be maybe, but not for the reasons we might think.

It is implausible that war risk would have advanced the cause of female suffrage prior to 1914. Women were not being conscripted or asked to otherwise directly participate in the war effort. Given the type of wars that were expected at the time, the idea that women would actually play a critical role in any war effort was also not anticipated. The two world wars turned out to be a new type of conflict: women were called into the war effort in both direct and indirect ways involving government employment for the war effort and replacing men in economic tasks that were seen as

critical. If women could conduct these tasks usually carried out by men, then why should they not also have the right to vote?[33]

It is clear that among countries that participated in the two world wars, women's suffrage often followed soon afterward. Austria and the United Kingdom gave voting rights to women soon after World War I, and Belgium, France, and Italy took the same step in the immediate wake of World War II—the timing here was certainly no coincidence.

But the twist to the story is that European states that had not participated directly in World War I also took the same steps. In the wake of World War I, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden all established full female suffrage. This gives a strong sense then that while women's war efforts may have mattered, it was also true that the end of a large-scale war offered a new opening to reform movements in general.

The remaining possibility for women's suffrage is that its emergence may also have depended on what we might call "normal" politics, for lack of a better term. The political scientist Dawn Teele has recently demonstrated that when existing leaders thought that their party's vote share would benefit disproportionately from extending the suffrage to women, they pushed for this reform.[34] One might consider this to be a variant of the argument I have made throughout this book about the effect of rulers needing their people, but it is a bit of a stretch. There is one way, though, that the extension of female suffrage depended very closely on the arguments I have made. In some states in the western portion of the United States, such as Wyoming, the pressure to attract female residents to an area where there were six adult men for every adult woman pushed male elites to grant female suffrage considerably earlier than happened elsewhere in the United States.[35]

Democracy Posed Less Danger to Elites than Feared

There is one final important reason for the spread of democracy in Europe. Over time, European elites learned that they had less to fear from democracy than they had originally believed.

For much of the nineteenth century, debates about universal suffrage on the part of European elites provoked the same fears that had been held by some of America's Founding Fathers—mass enfranchisement might entail a

wholesale expropriation of property. “Democracy” itself was a dirty word. But as more and more countries acquired democratic experience, the anticipated cataclysm did not take place. Ultimately, the fact that democracy posed less danger to elites than initially feared may have helped ensure its continued existence.

Evidence on progressive taxation shows that democracy alone did not produce massive redistribution. In an initial series of democratic revolts in 1848, participants had called for establishing top tax rates that would see the richest members of society pay fully half of their income in tax.[36] The democratic revolutions of 1848 were too brief to see such plans implemented, but we can still use these revolutions as a gauge to compare them with what happened once democracy arrived for good. On the eve of World War I, many European countries had had universal or near universal suffrage for decades. But the average top marginal rate of income taxation in Europe was still in the single digits, and data on inheritance tax rates tell a very similar story.[37] Prior to 1914 the advance of democracy failed to produce a general move to redistribute income or wealth through the tax system. It was only subsequently—in an environment of mass warfare when new demands were made on individuals—that steeply progressive tax systems would be adopted.[38]

Consider next the evidence on government debt. Political and economic elites in nineteenth-century Europe often held a very significant fraction of their wealth in government bonds. In an era where many states financed their debts through regressive taxes on common consumption goods, it was feared that mass enfranchisement could compromise the security of this form of wealth. There might be pressures to cut consumption taxes even if this sparked a government default. For most of Europe, nothing of the sort happened. To see this, we can look at bond yields. In Great Britain yields on British Consols rose in anticipation of the 1832 act that expanded the franchise, but they quickly returned to the same level afterward. Aditya Dasgupta and Daniel Ziblatt have shown that yield spikes in advance of subsequent suffrage reform acts proved to be successively smaller—wealth holders were learning that democracy was posing less danger than they had feared.[39]

Consider finally what we know about the evolution of wealth inequality before and after the expansion of the suffrage. Economists often measure wealth inequality by estimating what percent of a country's total wealth is held by the top 1 percent of households (or individuals). To calculate this share there must be some record of individual wealth, and one source of this is records from an estate or inheritance tax. Since France was among the first countries to adopt a modern inheritance tax, the French data provide us with a particularly long-run view of wealth inequality before, during, and after the expansion of the suffrage.

Figure 11.3 shows the evolution of wealth inequality in France, with records beginning in 1810. At that time the top 1 percent of individuals in France controlled 46 percent of their country's wealth. France had a brief experiment with universal suffrage with the Second Republic, beginning in 1848, but this was too brief a period for us to expect democracy to have done much to move the wealth distribution.

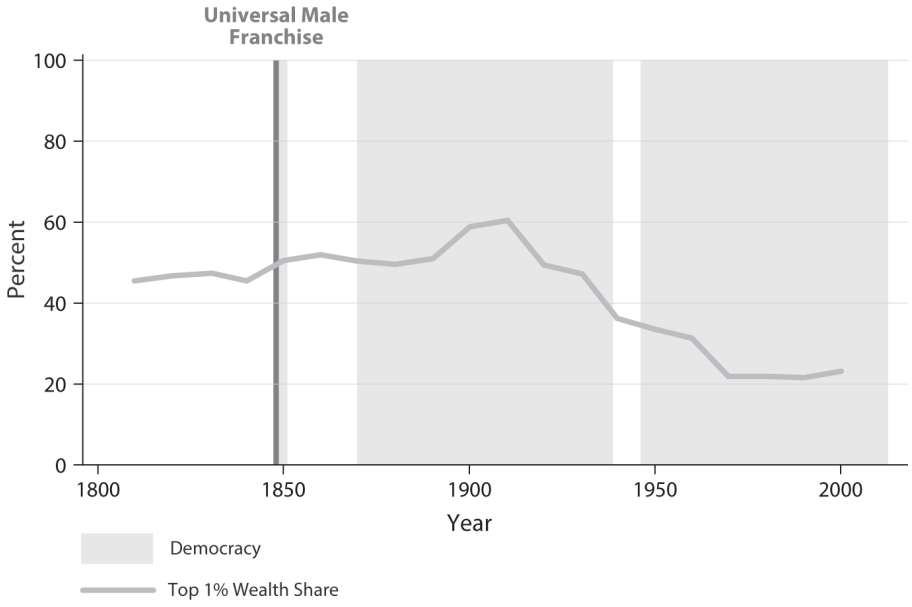


FIGURE 11.3. Wealth inequality and universal suffrage in France. This figure is from Scheve and Stasavage 2017 drawing on wealth inequality data reported in Piketty 2014.

The experience of the Third Republic provides us with a better test of the effect of universal suffrage on wealth inequality. Universal suffrage was adopted at the Republic's establishment in 1870 and maintained continuously until its end in 1940. During the first four decades of the

republic, wealth inequality rose from 50 to 60 percent. It was only long afterward that wealth inequality entered into a steady decline, so that at the time of France's defeat by Germany in 1940, the top 1 percent's share of national wealth had shrunk to a little more than a third.

How can we interpret these changes? The first thing to say is that if you were a wealthy Parisian in the 1870s, then any initial fears you might have had about Republican government would have soon been mollified. The French government did establish a system of compulsory primary education. This might have logically had an effect on wealth inequality over time as individuals from poorer households were able to gain an education and obtain better employment, but this was not the sort of equalization that elites feared from democracy. What they feared was massive expropriation and redistribution, and nothing even remotely close to that happened.

The government of the Third Republic relied principally on regressive, indirect taxes for revenue and maintained a system of direct taxation that had a rate of incidence on income that has been estimated to have been about 2 percent.[40] France did eventually establish a modern income tax, but this was not voted by the National Assembly until 1913 and the top marginal rate was set at only 2 percent. The story with France's inheritance tax was little different. This had been maintained at a rate of 1.15 percent during the dictatorship of Napoléon III between 1851 and 1870. From that point, the top inheritance rate remained below 2 percent until 1902 when it was raised to 5 percent, and on the eve of World War I it stood at 6.5 percent. Because French government bonds were a principal way in which wealth was held during this period, we can also note that there were no disruptions to the regular servicing of government debt. For the first forty-five years of the Republic there was little implemented in the way of policies that elites had feared.

France was no exception in failing to see an effect of democracy on wealth inequality. In other countries for which we have data, wealth inequality did eventually fall, but the timing of this seemed to have little to do with when universal suffrage was achieved.[41] What seems to have mattered more for wealth inequality was the series of dislocations created by two world wars and the Great Depression. In a context of mass mobilization for war it was possible for the political left to create new

fairness-based arguments for steeply progressive taxation. If labor was to be conscripted, then the same should be true of capital.[42] Wars and economic depression also led to unanticipated inflation that substantially ate into the real value of existing fortunes. This was true for holders of government debt in particular.[43]

French Peasants: The Original Deplorables

There are two very different ways of explaining the failure of universal suffrage to influence the wealth distribution. The first way emphasizes some form of elite capture of democracy. The other way is to suggest that parties of the left who proposed measures to reduce inequality did not understand what many voters wanted.

France, once again, provides us with an instructive case. In 1848, urban uprisings in Paris led to the overthrow of King Louis Philippe's regime. In its place a Second Republic was decreed, to follow the First Republic that had briefly existed during the French Revolution. For the legislative election of 1849 parties of the left proposed a "social republic" that would have implemented policies to reduce inequality.[44] Many hoped (or feared) that this campaign platform would result in the election of a left-wing majority. In fact, just the opposite happened. A right-wing majority was elected, redistributive measures were ignored, and there was worse than that. Several months before the legislatives, French voters had elected Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoléon Bonaparte, as president of the Second Republic with a whopping 74 percent vote share. Three years later, in December 1851, Louis-Napoléon mounted a coup to abolish the Republic, combined with organizing a plebiscite where an immense majority gave him full constitutional powers.

The downfall of the Second Republic was produced by mutual incomprehension between urban and rural groups. The Parisian liberals and working-class groups who led the insurrections made little effort to understand the motivations of the French peasantry, who made up the large majority of French voters at this time. To the extent they did try to understand them, the French peasantry was described as being afflicted by "rural imbecility."[45] This sense of rural ignorance was fed by the incomprehension at peasants voting "against their own interest" to elect a

majority of the right. It was fed further by the fact that some areas that had voted for Louis-Napoléon in December then voted for the left in the spring, or vice versa. If Hillary Clinton in 2016 referred to some supporters of Donald Trump as "deplorables," then we might refer to the French peasants of 1849 who voted in a right-wing majority as the "original deplorables."

The first failure of urban elites seems to have been that while they proposed some policies that could have benefited the peasantry, they ignored others. A more progressive tax system was proposed, but the question of comprehensive agrarian reform was largely ignored. This could have involved road building, irrigation projects, and efforts to reform rural credit markets.[46]

Overlaying all of this was the fact that the French republican elite simply paid too little attention to the peasantry, except when they criticized them for their ignorance. Major newspapers on the republican side referred to the "lower classes," but when they used this term they meant low-income inhabitants in cities, not in the countryside.[47] More generally, the peasantry was ignored, or observers lamented peasant ignorance.[48] This was an intellectual movement that would eventually feed into the Marxist idea of "false consciousness"—the notion that people did not understand their own interests.

In an amazing turnabout, some forces in favor of the Republic supported restricting the vote so that only those who understood their true interests could participate. This was the case of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, who argued that fifty years of education would be necessary before the peasantry could vote. Otherwise, they were thought to have the same status as children.[49] There is an eerie parallel with observations like this and current proposals in the United States to establish an "epistocracy" where only those with knowledge can vote.[50]

The lesson of France's Second Republic is that a democratic society is rarely divided on a simple cleavage between those with wealth and those without, the sort of possibility so feared by America's Founding Fathers. It is instead the case that other cleavages get in the way. In the French case it was a stark difference between rural and urban areas, something that is salient in many countries today. We could speak also of yet another cleavage: the division over attitudes toward religion and the state. This

would play an increasingly important role in French politics later in the nineteenth century. Such a division can be a source of tension that undermines a republic.

This is what happened in France between 1848 and 1851. Some fear it may also be happening in the United States today. But in a very ironic way the division of those without wealth may have also allowed for the initial spread of democracy in France and elsewhere in Europe precisely because it posed less of a danger to elites than had been feared.

Why Didn't China Democratize?

If we shift our attention from Europe to other world regions, then a major question is why modern democracy did not spread to China. China has repeatedly disappointed the expectations of democratic optimists. This happened first with the failure to construct successful republican rule following the abdication of the last emperor of the Qing dynasty in 1912. It happened next with the consolidation of autocratic rule by Mao Zedong after 1949. It has happened yet again more recently as rapid economic growth has not resulted in political liberalization. As we consider each of these developments we should also keep one other thing in mind: despite lacking the institutions of modern democracy, from Mao Zedong forward, China's leaders have made very frequent reference to "democracy"—*minzhu* in direct translation. If China does ever "democratize" this may occur less with the establishment of multiparty elections than with other practices that make the ruling party increasingly beholden to public opinion.

No Legacy of Assembly Governance

After a long decline, China's last imperial dynasty, the Qing, collapsed quickly in the final months of 1911. A series of uprisings culminated in the abdication of the child emperor, Puyi, in February 1912. In its place a constitutional republic, commonly known as the Beiyang government, came into existence. Though it lasted until 1928, after a short time the Beiyang government had only nominal control of China's territory. The reality on the ground was that many Chinese provinces established autonomy, often under the control of warlords. Compounding the problem, the civilian leaders of the Beiyang government were often beholden to their generals.

The Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China, adopted in 1912, established a classic example of modern democracy, albeit with a limited franchise. It would be hard to attribute the problems of the Beiyang government to a failure of design because the constitution was directly modeled on existing examples from western Europe and the United States. Power was to be held by an assembly, a president, ministers, and courts. Members of the assembly were to be selected by each province with the selection method determined locally. A president and vice president were

themselves to be elected by the assembly. The president would then choose ministers who would govern. This was all a direct import of a model that had proved durable elsewhere.

The bigger reason for the failure of the Beiyang government is that it is difficult to establish governance by assembly in a setting where there is no history of doing things this way. Toward the end of the Qing dynasty there was a strong sentiment in certain quarters that Chinese institutions needed to be revamped, potentially by adopting those of the West. The Japanese success in doing this provided no small inspiration. As part of a broader movement, which included among other things the abolition of the imperial examination system, pro-reform officials considered introducing assembly governance into the mix. In 1909—just two years before its fall—the Qing government created a set of provincial assemblies, with members elected by the gentry class. There was also to be a National Assembly, but these bodies would not have real power, as they could control neither the bureaucracy nor the military. More fundamentally, nothing resembling these institutions had ever existed in China. We would have to hearken back to the municipal assemblies of the *guo ren* in the Eastern Zhou dynasty—more than two millennia prior to this date—to find a similar pattern of governance.

The historian Xiaowei Zheng has interpreted the failure of assembly governance in China in the following terms. Both before and after 1911, the objective of Chinese assembly representatives was to wrest power from an absolute monarchy, but in so doing, they then sought to arrogate full power for themselves. Unlike in countries that had a long history of assemblies limiting the power of monarchs, there was no Chinese tradition of limiting and diffusing power in this way.[51]

The Legacy of the Imperial State

Following Japanese invasion and a lengthy and bitter civil war, the People's Republic of China was proclaimed in the fall of 1949 by Mao Zedong. As the People's Liberation Army established unified control in the late 1940s, the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party promised to upend what they called the old "feudal" order of the imperial era. In many ways they succeeded in doing so, most notably with a land reform that dispossessed rural elites of their wealth.[52] This clearly differed drastically

from republican governance in the 1911 period where existing landed elites retained power. It also fits with a surprising—and more general—pattern identified by the political scientist Michael Albertus. It turns out that autocratic governments are more likely to implement land reforms than are democratic governments.[53] At least in this way, the "democracy" proclaimed by Mao was more successful at generating redistribution than were many elected democratic governments, but in this case land reform came with very substantial violence and death.

Despite overturning China's old order, there were other important ways in which the PRC government relied on a long tradition of state control in China. One example of this phenomenon involved the registration and documentation of the population. We can recall from chapter 6 that Chinese dynasties from a very early date had been concerned with the control of their people. As early as the Warring States period this resulted in systems for registration and recording of the population. These were used to tax people either by conscripting their labor to fight or by requisitioning their agriculture produce. These systems were also used to encourage mutual surveillance among the population.

When the Chinese Communist Party assumed power in 1949, Mao Zedong made the following declaration about state power. Stating that the ultimate goal of the Communists was to abolish state power, he emphasized that in the short term it would need to be reinforced.

> "Don't you want to abolish state power?" Yes, we do, but not right now; we cannot do it yet. Why? Because imperialism still exists, because classes still exist in our country. Our present task is to strengthen the people's state apparatus—mainly the people's army, the people's police and the people's courts—in order to consolidate the national defence and protect the people's interests.[54]

One of the ways in which the Communist Party strengthened state power after 1949 was to create the *hukou* system for population registration.[55] This drew directly on the old imperial model of household registration. It also drew on experience from the Nationalist government that controlled part of China between 1927 and 1949. Unlike systems of household registration in

earlier eras, the *hukou* system is not used as a basis for taxation. Its principal use is instead to maintain order by creating a de facto restriction on freedom of movement—individuals can only receive social benefits in the area where they are registered.

The *hukou* system provides one example of a strong state legacy that greatly favored autocratic rule in China after 1949. We know for a fact that under the Kuomintang-controlled government between 1927 and 1949 previous records from the imperial era were helpful in establishing population registers.[56] This must have also been the case after 1949.[57]

A Commercial Revolution Did Not Bring Consensual Government

China has undergone a dramatic commercial revolution in recent years. We should recall that it also had commercial and technological revolutions in the past. The parallels between those earlier revolutions and today can help us to better understand China's recent non-democratization. Recall that during the Song dynasty, China saw a substantial increase in urbanization as well as the introduction of new technologies for communication. The rapid expansion of woodblock printing allowed for improved communication and diffusion of knowledge. But this did not result in the sort of political change that printing is thought to have generated in Europe. What happened instead was that the Chinese state promoted the use of printing to spread technical knowledge while at the same time monitoring all publications to prevent the spread of disagreeable political ideas. Recent years have seen a repeat of the exact phenomenon with the Internet and social media. Better communication among Chinese citizens is advantageous to the extent that it allows for diffusion of knowledge necessary for development. But contrary to the expectations of many Western observers of several decades ago, allowing the diffusion of knowledge necessary for innovation and development does not have to also be accompanied by openness to the spread of alternative political ideas. So far, it is an open question how long this can be maintained. Ten years ago, those who wrote about the effect of Internet penetration in China suggested that official censorship was repeatedly undermined by the ability of ordinary citizens to find new and surprising forms of protest. Guobin Yang in 2009 referred to this as "a

world of carnival, community, and contention in and through cyberspace."[58] More recent accounts, such as that by Margaret Roberts, have been decidedly less optimistic.[59]

The Chinese Communist Party Has Repeatedly Referred to Democracy

In spite of all the features that prompt many to think of the current Chinese government as an autocracy, since 1949 and before Chinese Communist leaders have repeatedly used the word "democracy," or *minzhu*, when referring to how they govern.[60] When Mao wrote about democracy at the outset of the People's Republic, he followed writers of Marxist inspiration in differentiating between a "bourgeois democracy" of the sort that they thought existed in the West and a "people's democracy" of the sort he sought to establish.[61] So what sort of importance should we attach to the idea of a people's democracy? Has it had any meaning in China or might it have meaning one day?

One thing that is clear from recent Chinese practice is that a people's democracy would differ quite radically from what I have called modern democracy in that it does not involve elections contested by political parties. Nor does it involve an assembly that actually places a real check on a country's executive. On paper China does have just such an institution, the National People's Congress, but the people who constructed the Standard Cross Cultural Sample would not have coded this as an example of governance by council, because there is little evidence that this body presents a check on executive authority.

The remaining possibility is that a people's democracy involves some sort of broad popular participation in governance but without having elections. When prompted with the idea that democracy should primarily be about elections, one protesting Chinese student in 1989 said that they instead thought of "Rousseau and the model of direct participation."[62] It is clear today that there are many institutionalized venues through which the Chinese government seeks input from members of society—the question is whether it listens.

Russia's Failure to Democratize

Imperial Russia presents the main example, after China, of a large power that failed to democratize during the twentieth century, excepting if one considers a brief period after 1991, and even then, the change was only temporary. The interesting fact about Russia is that on the surface, the preconditions would seem to have been almost the exact opposite of those in China. Russia lacked the intensive high-yield agriculture that favored the bureaucratic alternative. In a very sparsely populated country, Russian peasants also had an exit option; if they were not happy with their local lord, they could simply move elsewhere.[63] Finally, imperial Russian rulers lacked many of the autocracy-reinforcing technologies developed in other societies. So why did Russia not become an early democracy and then a modern one? Ultimately, Russia's autocratic trajectory may have been determined by the fact that during the imperial period it had a weak state but an even weaker society. In this context rulers had relatively little to gain from building a system of representation of the sort that developed in western Europe. What they did instead was gradually extend bureaucratic control, even if this control was much weaker than that which existed in the Prussian case that they sought to imitate.

Early Russian Assemblies

The Russian polity first emerged as a result of territorial consolidation by the princes of Muscovy, a process that began in the fourteenth century; it extended through the appearance of the first "tsar" of Russia in 1547 and the institutional reforms adopted by Peter the Great, who ruled from 1682 to 1725. Muscovy did have some institutions that could have formed the basis for early democratic governance. Some have argued that this was part of an institutional panoply adopted from Mongol practices—including the *kurultay*—but this is much debated.[64] We need to ask whether Russian councils bore any resemblance to the representative bodies that emerged and prospered throughout western Europe at this time.

The first of these councils was composed of nobles that advised the prince. In Muscovy and neighboring states nobles of the highest rank were

referred to as Boyars, so the council would become known to later historians as the Boyar duma. The word "duma" here literally means "thought" but by extension is also taken to mean "advice," "counsel," or "a council."[65] Councils of this sort are said to have been held by Kievan, and then Muscovite, princes from the ninth through the eighteenth century, so there is no doubt that we are talking about an institution with a lengthy history.[66] The problem is that the prerogatives of the Boyar council were limited, and they became more so over time—by the 1670s meetings of the council had become purely ceremonial.[67]

The second institution to which I will refer has come to be known as the *zemsky sobor*, or "assembly of the land." This was a larger body, numbering up to several hundred, that was first called by Ivan IV (The Terrible), who reigned from 1533 to 1584. He was the first Russian ruler to be called tsar. Though Ivan's nickname alone makes it hard for us to think of him as a great democrat, some historians have made a valiant effort to argue that the *zemsky sobor* was a proto-parliamentary body that could have eventually led Russia to being a democracy. As with the council of the Boyars, no one actually used the term *zemsky sobor* when these meetings were taking place during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[68] What we do know is that these meetings were ad hoc affairs involving anywhere from a few dozen to a few hundred participants. The great number of participants were senior military servitors of the tsar.[69] In the end, the *zemsky sobor* did not survive beyond the end of the seventeenth century.

Beyond their limited prerogatives and ad hoc nature, the striking features of early Russian assemblies compared to those in western Europe was the absence of representatives of the towns. In chapter 5 we saw that in western Europe, beginning in the thirteenth century representatives from towns gained access to assemblies that had previously been composed of nobles and clergy. This was a watershed moment in the development of political representation and an important step toward the construction of modern democracy. In Russia this simply did not happen. Some might argue that autocratic ideology accounts for the difference, but there is a more immediate explanation: Russia had few towns.[70] Those towns that existed were scattered across a dauntingly large territory, and they tended to be small and not very developed. In western Europe the commercial riches of

medieval towns provided an important opportunity for princes. The towns could be a significant source of tax revenue, and they could collect this revenue themselves if their representatives were given seats in assemblies. In Russia the towns simply weren't worth it, nor was there much of a tradition of guilds and other corporate bodies as existed in western Europe.[71]

Though Russia had few towns, it did initially have a peasantry whose exit options could have helped pave the way for early democracy, at least at the local level. The problem was that around the turn of the seventeenth century the peasants lost this leverage. Given Russia's northerly location, its peasantry were always particularly susceptible to climatic variation. Between 1601 and 1603 Russia experienced a climate-induced famine that was particularly severe. As a result of this and related events, the peasantry increasingly looked to nobles for protection, and they lost their exit option. By 1649 this was enshrined in a legal provision binding peasants to the land upon which they were currently located.[72]

Building the Bureaucratic Alternative

The alternative pursued by the tsars of Russia was to gradually build a bureaucratic state. During the seventeenth century the rulers of Muscovy established a bureaucracy based on a chancellery system staffed by a group of individuals known as the *prikaznye liudi*. These individuals served at the pleasure of the tsar rather than having any independent power base. Unlike much of the nobility, the *prikaznye* were literate. The number of chancellery offices expanded significantly during the seventeenth century, and the number of *prikaznye liudi* expanded tenfold from several hundred in 1613, the year in which the first member of the Romanov family acceded to the throne, to several thousand in 1689. One feature of this bureaucracy was that as in Prussia at the time, there was a direct linkage between fiscal and military affairs as the bureaucrats were directly involved in provisioning the army.[73] The tsars of Russia also successfully minimized any degree of self-government enjoyed by their towns. At the outset of the seventeenth century, the towns were shaken by the same crisis inflicted on the peasantry, and in the wake of this a system of town governors was adopted with each appointed by the tsar.[74]

As we point to imperial Russian similarities with Prussia, we should also emphasize a critical difference. A bureaucracy numbering several thousand was not particularly large given that Russia in 1700 may have had upward of twenty million inhabitants who were also spread across a vast territory.[75] Prussia maintained a state bureaucracy of similar size in spite of having less than one-tenth the population of Russia at this time.[76] When the Russian state attempted to conduct a census following Peter the Great's establishment of a poll tax in 1718, this took five years to complete.[77] The end result of Russian state development was a relatively weak state bureaucracy that supplanted even weaker representative institutions. This helped set Russia on a long course away from democracy.

The World's Largest Democracy

If some of America's Founding Fathers—fearful of maintaining a republic in a vast country—had considered the case of India, they would have certainly despaired. India's population of 330 million at independence was more than one hundred times the population of the United States in 1776. If you were Seymour Martin Lipset writing in 1959, you would have also drawn a negative conclusion—India was too poor to be a democracy. At independence, its GDP per capita (in today's dollars) was about $1,400, or only half as rich as France in 1870. In terms of most conventional theories of political science, India in the late 1940s had no business being a democracy.

It is possible that British influence had some effect on modern democracy in India. The latter stages of colonial-rule India allowed for substantial self-government and the development of political parties.[78] This is very different from China where the initial British influence involved the sale of opium. But this is hardly the whole story, nor the most important element.

A more complete explanation for India's democratic success lies in the fact that unlike China, India had less of a legacy of a centralized bureaucratic state. At the same time, India also had a tradition of early democratic governance. I am not saying here that because Buddha's clan in the sixth century BCE elected its leaders, India was destined to be a democracy today. But this tradition may still have mattered, and the economist and philosopher Amartya Sen has suggested precisely this.[79]

Unlike China, India over the past two millennia has rarely been under control of a unified state. If we were to look for a legacy of a strong, bureaucratic state, then we would focus on the Mughal dynasty, which began in 1526. The empire was consolidated, and state institutions were constructed during the reign of Akbar from 1556 to 1605.

At the outset of Akbar's rule, Mughal revenue collection resembled tribute rather than taxation. North India contained a variety of chiefdoms of different sizes where local elites organized peasants to clear jungle areas and establish cultivation. Akbar used his rule to establish a more centralized system based on regular taxation of income from land. This occurred under

his finance minister, Todar Mal, who established agricultural production statistics while also implementing a system of uniform weights and measures. He also created a bureaucracy to assess and collect taxes, whereas previously Mughal rulers had relied on freelancing locals.[80] All of this resulted in a system where Mughal rulers could directly assess and collect taxes based on local conditions, and the result was that by 1595, Mughal emperors were able to extract about 5 percent of total production for their own purposes. This was a substantial amount if we compare it to the extraction ratios in Figure 1.1. It was also certainly a higher level of revenue extraction than in any European country at this time.[81]

The key fact about centralized and bureaucratic Mughal rule is that it did not last, and even at its height, it failed to do away with all vestiges of early democracy. While Akbar established a centralized tax system, he did not establish a completely centralized form of rule. He found himself obliged to accept the existence of clan councils at the local level. The councils accepted the new revenue system and in exchange they retained the right to manage other aspects of their affairs.[82] The way in which these councils are described bears much resemblance to the council governance we considered in ancient India in chapter 2.

The Mughal Empire ultimately disintegrated into a series of fragmented, weak successor states with less extractive capacity, and this was the pattern of governance that the British would find upon their conquest.[83] As the British sought to govern India, they faced the same problem as previous rulers: how to bind together a very large area filled with many autonomous local groups. As they did so, British observers drew conclusions about the nature of Indian communities and how they governed themselves. Writing in 1836, Charles Metcalfe had this to say about a tradition of republican governance at the village level.

> The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they can want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; Hindoo, Patan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sikh, English are all masters in turn; but the village community remains the same.[84]

The picture painted here is one where Indian villages were self-governing entities, periodically drawn into more centralized arrangements but never for very long. In China it is also the case that over time, a village would witness a succession of dynasties, but the rise and fall of dynasties would occur more slowly. Also, though Chinese villages had mechanisms for self-governance, one would be hard-pressed to find observers referring to them as “little republics.” In sum, it sounds as if India’s long history of collective governance made it fertile terrain for the transition to modern democracy.

How Democracy Spread in Africa

If the big success story of democracy's second wave was the (re)establishment of democracy in India, in the thirty years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, one of the new democratic success stories has been its spread in Sub-Saharan Africa.[85] By most measures, Africa today remains a region where democracy is less widespread than it is elsewhere. The success has been in relative terms. In 1989 Africa was a continent where one-party states prevailed, almost monolithically. There were a few democratic outposts in Botswana and (partially) in Senegal, but that was about it. Multiparty elections were almost nonexistent. Thirty years later multiparty elections are the norm. In many cases these are flawed and fraudulent, but in something like a third of the continent's countries we can speak of actual democracies, not only in terms of how outsiders judge them but also in terms of what Africans themselves suggest in surveys. This is a far cry from the Middle East, a region with a legacy of strong bureaucratic states where there has been essentially no transition to democracy. In what follows I will suggest that a legacy of state weakness may have helped pave the way for this change. But first I will describe the initial failure of democracy when African countries first gained independence from colonial control.

As we contemplate the history of democracy in Africa, we should also recall the evidence we saw in chapter 2. Early democracy was widespread in precolonial Africa. So once again, Africa's trajectory is another illustration of the decline and subsequent rise of democracy.

The Suns of Independence

In 1968 Ahmadou Kourouma, an Ivoirian novelist, published a book titled *Les soleils des indépendances*. He portrayed a fictional country, the Ebony Coast, where as the colonial power departed, there had been much hope for a better life as an independent country. What happened instead was the era of the one-party state. Initial experience with democracy in African countries after independence was not a positive one. When African states freed themselves from colonial control, most commonly around 1960, they

established institutions of modern democracy, but these then quickly unraveled.

Ghana provides a classic example of the unraveling. Its first presidential election, held on April 27, 1960, was a multiparty contest won by Kwame Nkrumah. By 1964 Ghana had officially become a one-party state. A referendum result made the Convention People's Party the sole legal party —supposedly 99.91 percent of the roughly three million votes cast were in favor of this change.[86] After Nkrumah's fall in 1966, contested elections were reintroduced, but the country suffered through long years of military coups, both failed and successful.

In some African countries a one-party state was established directly at independence. In 1960 Ghana's neighbor Côte d'Ivoire adopted a constitution that made the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, or the PDCI —for its French acronym—the sole legal party. In a series of presidential elections held at five-year intervals between 1960 and 1985, the PDCI's leader, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, never received less than a reported 98.8 percent of the vote. It was quite a remarkable record. And Côte d'Ivoire under the PDCI did not only have single-party control of elections; it also had single-party control of the media. From 1964 one daily newspaper, *Fraternité Matin*, appeared each morning, and it was controlled by the government. There was also a single newspaper, *Ivoir'Soir*, that appeared each evening, also controlled by the government. Practices were the same with radio and television channels.

African autocracies did not emerge because of strong state institutions that controlled society.[87] A number of states did develop systems for collecting revenue, but this was mostly dependent on the existence of an export crop, such as coffee or cocoa. Given the limited number of natural harbors in Africa, cash crops needed to be exported from a small number of locations, and physical control of these locations was sufficient to allow for a system of taxation. In a country like Côte d'Ivoire, instead of needing to develop a bureaucracy to assess and collect taxes in individual villages, all that was needed was to monitor and tax exports at two choke points, the ports of San Pedro and Abidjan.

Instead of strong state institutions, it was outside support that allowed African autocracies to survive. Recall from the discussion of early

democracy in Arabia that stronger, more autocratic states were able to emerge as a result of support from outside powers who were vying for control. In this case the outside powers were the Roman and Sasanian empires. In Africa between 1960 and 1989 the outside powers were the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom. Côte d'Ivoire provides an excellent example of how outside support helped reinforce autocracies that otherwise had weak states. In 1970 the total population of Côte d'Ivoire was about five million people.[88] Its army numbered only about five thousand men, so one soldier for about a thousand people. For comparison, this is a ratio that is five times smaller than what we would find in a substantially militarized country like Rwanda today. But the government of Côte d'Ivoire did not need to have a strong military because it had a French military base in the capital, Abidjan, and a defense treaty of mutual assistance. It was once outside support for autocracy weakened that many African rulers would find themselves ill-equipped to resist democratization.

A New Wave of Democratization

The end of the Cold War dramatically improved prospects for democracy in Africa, just as it did with other regions. Instead of propping up autocratic regimes in order to gain an edge on rivals, those outside powers still intervening in Africa were more likely to adopt an official policy of promoting democracy. But the democratic wave after 1989 was not something that would be determined by outsiders. We can instead show how the long-run legacy of African state development influenced possibilities for sustaining democracy. Democracy was more likely to emerge and survive in countries with weaker states.

In the spring of 1991, Samuel Huntington published an article in the *Journal of Democracy* titled "Democracy's Third Wave."[89] This was a companion piece to his book of the same title. Huntington assessed the prospects for democracy in different world regions, and his view of African prospects was a very dim one. He based this on the fact that African countries were too poor to be democracies and they had poor growth prospects. In his words, "The economic obstacles to democratization in sub-

Saharan Africa will remain overwhelming well into the twenty-first century."[90]

As long as one thinks that a shift from having no African democracies to having about a third of Africa's countries be democratic is a big change, then we have to conclude that Huntington's prediction turned out to be overly pessimistic. In the introduction to their recent retrospective on African elections, Jaimie Bleck and Nicolas van de Walle have used three different African election outcomes in 2016 to illustrate the trajectory taken by different countries. In Zambia there was an election flawed by violence in which the loser failed to accept the result, and he was jailed by the victorious incumbent. Also, in 2016 the incumbent president in the Gambia refused to concede that he had lost the presidential election despite strong indications to the contrary. Finally, in yet another election in 2016, this time in Ghana, the losing incumbent accepted the official results of an election that was judged to have been mostly problem free.[91]

The three election experiences cited by Bleck and van de Walle turn out to be very representative of what outside observers who produce systematic assessments think of African democracy. Freedom House is an organization that classifies a country as an "electoral democracy" if it has sufficiently robust election produces, in addition to political rights. For Freedom House, 29 percent of Sub-Saharan African countries are democracies today.[92] Those outside observers who construct the Polity index use a broader range of attributes to judge whether a country is a democracy. For these outside observers, 36 percent of African countries are democracies today.[93] Finally some political scientists have coded democracy based on the presence of free and fair elections under universal suffrage. Based on one recent data set, exactly one-third of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are democracies today.[94]

Instead of relying solely on outsiders using abstract indices, we might prefer to instead ask whether Africans themselves believe they live under democracy. The Afrobarometer project has regularly run surveys in a broad set of African countries asking whether people think that their government can be called a democracy.[95] One problem we know about survey responses is that they can be influenced by views on a second topic. Ask someone in Africa—or anywhere else—whether their country is a democracy, and the

response may be influenced by whether the party they support happens to be in power. To deal with this problem I constructed a self-assessment of democracy measure that controls for an individual's assessment of the incumbent head of government's performance. The idea here is that if even those who think a current president is performing poorly say their country is a democracy, this sends a pretty strong signal. Likewise, if those who think the president is performing well nonetheless say their country is not a democracy, this also says something.

Using the above procedure, I created a "Self-Assessment of Democracy" index that is based on the responses of more than 50,000 Africans interviewed by the Afrobarometer project. The index is scaled from 0 to 100, with 0 assigned to the lowest average self-assessment (Sudan) and 100 assigned to the country with the highest self-assessment (Niger). Ghana came a close second to Niger. There turned out to be a high correlation between the Self-Assessment of Democracy index and classifications by outside observers.[96] In what follows I will use the self-assessment scale to investigate how a history of state weakness favored democracy.

A Legacy of State Weakness

Let us return to Samuel Huntington's prediction from 1991 and its judgment that African countries were probably too poor to sustain democracy. If this was correct, then if any African countries stood a chance of deviating from this trend, it would probably be those that are more developed than their peers. We might measure this by looking at those countries that have higher levels of income per capita, those with higher literacy rates, and perhaps also those that are more urbanized. It turns out that these indicators do a strikingly poor job of predicting democracy in Africa today. When using the self-assessment of democracy index it is the countries that are poorer, are less urbanized, and have lower levels of literacy that are more like to be democracies today.[97]

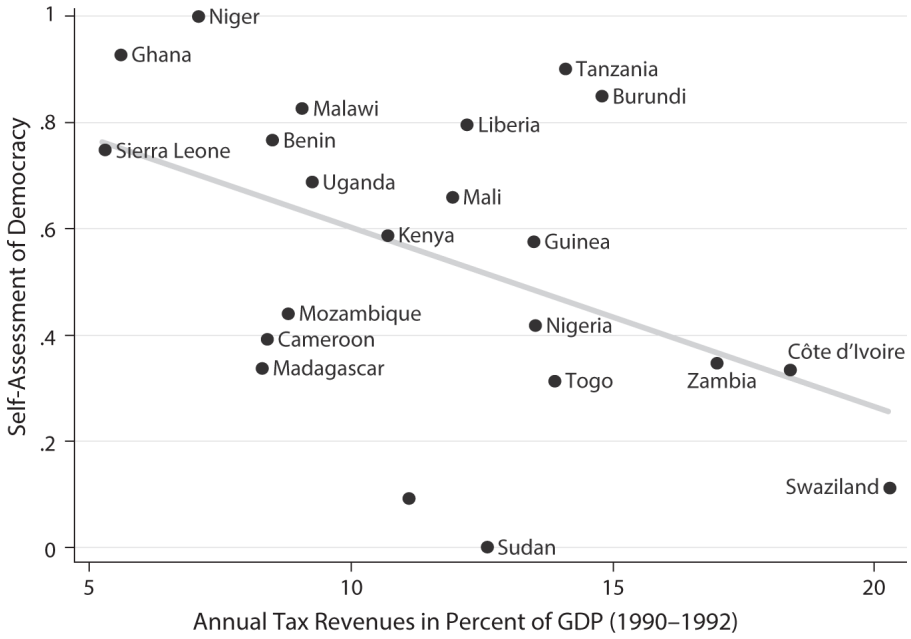


FIGURE 11.4. State revenues and democracy in Africa. The figure reports the self-assessment of democracy index, based on Afrobarometer data against annual tax revenues from the IMF World Revenue Longitudinal database.

There is an alternative explanation that does a better job of accounting for African democracy today, and it is one that fits with what I have argued throughout this book: African countries are more likely to be democracies today if they had weak states at the time that the Berlin Wall fell. State weakness may have made it more difficult for incumbent presidents to resist democratization.[98]

Consider the evidence in Figure 11.4. This is a scatterplot in which the Self-Assessment of Democracy scale is shown on the vertical axis. The horizontal axis shows the average annual taxes collected by government (as a share of GDP) between 1990 and 1992 at the outset of the wave of democratization. I focus on tax revenue here because this is a better proxy for state strength than is overall revenue, which would also include revenues from natural resources or aid flows. There was very considerable variation in tax revenue circa 1990. This can partly be explained by natural endowments, but not only. In 1990 tax revenues were four times higher in Côte d'Ivoire than in neighboring Ghana. What made the difference was a history of state collapse in Ghana.

The trend in Figure 11.4 is readily apparent. Africans themselves are much more likely to judge that they are living in a democracy in countries

that had lower levels of tax collection at the outset of the current wave of democratization. The implied effect of state strength in 1990 is that for each increase in revenue of 1 percent of GDP, the democracy self-assessment drops by about three points on the 0 to 100 scale.[99]

Does Figure 11.4 capture an effect whereby African rulers in a weaker position were unable to resist demands for democratization from their societies? It is possible that the relationship here might also reflect relative needs for foreign aid—more cash-strapped governments would be less able to resist donor demands to hold elections. However, donor demands often had a greater impact on the formal trappings of democracy—whether an election was held in which multiple political parties competed—and less on the finer elements that are likely to move the self-assessment index.

So, it is possible that a legacy of state weakness created fertile ground for democratization in Africa. One of the interesting features of this is that if we look at the relationship between democracy and tax collection today in African countries, then we no longer see any correlation. This means that democratizing countries have been able to catch up to their peers in terms of tax collection. This could just be a process of mean reversion, or it could be a more deliberate story of state building. If so, this would also be another example of sequencing. Democracy can be better sustained if its establishment precedes the development of a strong state.

If African democracy seems to have been more feasible in cases where states were initially weak, there has been a downside to this. Without an effective state, it is hard to deliver services like education and health care that people would like to be able to expect. It is possible that this has led in some cases to an equilibrium where state weakness means that central rulers find it impossible to sustain autocracy while at the same time having little ability to provide services for their people.[100]

Finally, there is also another part of this story that would lead us to draw less rosy conclusions for the future of democracy in Africa. Some African countries—those where free and fair elections have not become well anchored—have nonetheless constructed increasingly powerful bureaucracies. Take the case of Uganda, a country that in the 1990s appeared to be transitioning to a system of free and fair elections but which since that point has become something of an elected autocracy. Pia Raffler,

a political scientist, has shown that in Uganda today bureaucrats now command more authority at the local level than do politicians.[101]

The Surprising Spread of Modern Democracy

The spread of modern democracy over the last two hundred years has been a remarkable and a surprising one. Democracy has spread to countries and places that many believed were too poor to sustain this institution. At the same time, as other countries have grown richer, democracy has failed to take hold despite expectations that it would. Long-run patterns of state development provide a better explanation for what has happened. Modern democracy has had a greater chance of taking root in areas that lack a history of a strong bureaucratic state that could cement autocratic rule. At the same time, democratic stability has hardly been ensured in these places. In the final chapter of this book I will ask what happens next for modern democracy.

12

The Ongoing Democratic Experiment

WE LIVE TODAY in an age of democratic anxiety. In what used to be called the "advanced industrialized" world there is a palpable fear that anti-democratic reflexes not felt for many decades have suddenly reawakened. In parallel, publics have voted for political alternatives that many find shocking and inexplicable. Few would have imagined just a decade ago that the lessons from failed democracies elsewhere would be used to ask whether the United States might suffer the same fate.[1] To add to this, in those countries that have recently transitioned to democracy, there are questions whether this movement is less inevitable than it once seemed. The new word of the day for those taking stock of democracy in these countries is *backsliding*.[2] Finally, enduring autocracies like China seem to offer more of an alternative model than they did decades ago. This is all enough to make one think that maybe this book should have been about the rise and subsequent decline of democracy, not the reverse. In this final chapter I will ask what history tells us about our current democratic anxieties.

History suggests that modern democracy is an ongoing experiment, and in many ways, we should be surprised that it has worked at all. Recall the critique levied by John Taylor, soon after the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. He feared that biennial elections to Congress would be but a brief "political spasm" and "one day's mockery of importance" after which the "5,000" would reassert their dominance over the "5,000,000." Taylor argued for greater local control where people could participate in a more regular manner and be in closer contact with their representatives. Two hundred and ten years later, a political theorist named John Dunn would say something very similar, and he put it this way.

> If ancient democracy was the citizens choosing freely and immediately for themselves, modern democracy, it seems, is principally the citizens

> very intermittently, choosing under highly constrained circumstances, the relatively small number of their fellows who will from then on choose for them. There are many obvious ways in which modern citizens have no need whatever to accept this bargain.[3]

The comments by Taylor and Dunn, offered two centuries apart, point to the first fracture point of modern democracy: citizen participation is very broad, but it also risks being very thin. The question then is when citizens will think that this is something other than the sham that Taylor feared. The alternative may be one where democracy either dies or continues only in name as the 5,000—what today we would call the top 0.1 percent—dominate an unequal democracy of the sort that the political scientist Larry Bartels has written about.[4]

In considering how to design a republic, many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers took the opposite view from Taylor. They worried that the 5,000,000 would expropriate the wealth of the 5,000. This was not just a fear held by the authors of the Federalist Papers. Throughout western Europe after 1789 political thinkers sought to create republican institutions that would limit the influence of the masses.[5] The most obvious way to do this was to limit the suffrage, or to have systems of weighted voting, or to have upper chambers in legislatures to resist popular passions. But as we saw in chapter 11, these fears turned out to be overdone. Even after universal suffrage was established, there was no massive redistribution of wealth. Wealth inequality did eventually drop, but not as a result of democracy. It was instead wartime events, economic crisis, and also possibly underlying technological changes that led to this shift. History suggests that even in a full democracy, the risk that the 5,000 will dominate is much greater than the threat that the 5,000,000 will expropriate the 5,000.

The second fracture point of modern democracy concerns executive power. It turns out that an elected leader at the helm of a modern democratic state can sometimes behave just as despotically as an autocrat. In early democracies from the Huron to the Dutch Republic this was simply not possible because power was so decentralized. This decentralization made the system stable, but the disadvantage was inflexibility. The Dutch found this out as the extreme decentralization of their institutions led to economic

stagnation—local interests created barriers to entry into markets that stifled innovation.

The English pioneered the prototype for the centralized executive in modern democracy. During the medieval era, European monarchs generally dealt with representative assemblies that had substantial blocking power. Localities could constrain their representatives with strict mandates. They could refuse individual decisions. Sometimes they could even refuse to participate. In England all of these constraints disappeared by the end of the fourteenth century. The Crown had succeeded in imposing a more centralized form of rule. Once Parliament established supremacy over the Crown after 1688, it assumed the same role—Parliament had a sort of absolute power. Under the U.S. Constitution, the power of the executive is, in theory, considerably more constrained. But recent decades have seen a considerable growth in executive power via the bureaucracy, particularly when the Congress is divided and/or unable to act. Writing in 2010, Bruce Ackerman, an eminent constitutional scholar, wrote about his fears of "the threat posed by the transformation of the White House into a platform for charismatic extremism and bureaucratic lawlessness."[6] In many minds that is precisely what happened a few short years afterward.

In sum, as societies shifted from early to modern democracy two problems emerged. The first was the problem of keeping citizens connected with a distant state. The second was that of constraining executive power. We should consider each of these in turn.

The Problem of a Distant State

A common view of American democracy is that problems of institutional design were solved in Philadelphia in 1787. Defending the proposed constitution, the authors of the Federalist Papers argued that a large republic would be more stable than a small one. The alternative view, which I wish to expose here, is that the U.S. Constitution did not solve the problem of distrust of a distant state. There need to be continuing investments to see that citizens remain trustful of modern democracy.[7]

Maybe James Madison Was Wrong about Large Republics

In the essay that has come to be known as Federalist 10, James Madison made the case for a larger republic being more sustainable than a small one. In what Clinton Rossiter, writing in 1961, referred to as a "masterful analysis," Madison focused on problems of "faction" or what we might think of today as excessive partisanship, polarization, and conflict. He posited that these problems would actually be greater in smaller republics. Therefore, concern about the great geographic scale of the proposed United States of America was unwarranted—in a large republic, mischiefs of faction operating at the local level would be submerged. It is fair to say that Rossiter's interpretation of Federalist 10 has been the dominant one. It is also possible that it sounded better in 1961 than it does in 2020. In today's world it is possible to argue that problems of polarization are fed precisely by the fact that the United States includes multiple regions where people have very different views. We also see better today that there can be a further cost to a large republic: citizen distrust and disengagement.

Federalist 10 appeared in New York newspapers on November 23, 1787. Madison's argument came timed to respond to an essay written by an Anti-federalist who adopted the pseudonym of Brutus. Four weeks prior to Madison, on October 18, 1787, Brutus published an essay in the *New York Journal* that made the following criticism of the proposed republic.

> The different parts of so extensive a country could not possibly be made acquainted with the conduct of their representatives, nor be informed of

> the reasons upon which measures were founded. The consequence will be, they will have no confidence in their legislature, suspect them of ambitious views, be jealous of every measure they adopt, and will not support the laws they pass.[8]

While Madison focused on problems of faction, Brutus emphasized the link between individual citizens and their government. And the quote from his essay sounds much like it could describe the United States today where trust in the federal government has reached a low point.

Distrust and Distant Government

We can use survey evidence on trust in government to support the argument that Brutus made. Across countries and regions, trust in government is, on average, lower in larger-scale settings. But at the same time, the evidence also suggests that large scale is not fate.

Consider first the evidence from the fall 2018 Eurobarometer survey on trust in the national government.[9] Among countries with less than twenty million inhabitants, levels of trust in government average 49 percent. In countries with more than twenty million inhabitants the average level of trust in government is only 32 percent—a stark difference.[10] But the data also suggest that the obstacle of large scale can be overcome. With a level of trust in government of 54 percent, Germany—with a population of more than 80 million—resembles countries with substantially smaller populations. Unfortunately, small scale is not fate either. Despite its relatively small population of eleven million, trust in the national government in Greece stands at only 14 percent.

Survey evidence from the United States mirrors the international trends. It is common today to refer to declining trust in government in the United States, and some scholars have shown that a lack of trust in the federal government impedes the ability of leaders to enact new policies.[11] But this problem of distrust is most relevant for the federal government and not for the state and local governments that operate on a smaller scale.[12] One sees the same pattern with the media; there is greater trust at the local level.

Dealing with Distrust

How could one deal with the current distrust in government? One option is to devolve power to lower levels. The conservative commentator Yuval Levin refers to "subsidiarity" as the principle that governance should be carried out at the lowest level that is practical.[13] Leaders of the European Union have employed the same term as a way of addressing their region's "democratic deficit." We already employ subsidiarity to a great extent in the United States by devolving responsibility to state and local governments for things such as education, policing, and the like.

The problem with the subsidiarity solution is that it can only go so far. Brian Barry, an influential political theorist, made this point when reviewing Robert Dahl and Edward Tufte's work on size and democracy. Barry's point was that confining governance to ever smaller units is of little use if the units become so small that they cannot control events around them.[14] One could, in theory, arrange things so that Youngstown, Ohio, had its own trade policy and established its own currency. But the citizens of Youngstown would soon find events dictated to them by outside actors.

So, in the absence of further devolution to lower levels, what could spur renewed trust in the U.S. federal government? Here we should remember the lessons of history, and the history of the Early Republic. In chapter 10 we saw that the provisions in the Constitution alone did not guarantee that citizens would be able to develop an informed opinion about the federal government. By 1791 James Madison himself was willing to recognize the difficulties for citizens in a large republic to inform themselves. This led him to support efforts to subsidize the circulation of newspapers. Later reformers proposed a system of common state-funded schooling to achieve the same goal.

The lesson from the Early Republic is that constitutional design on its own is not sufficient to ensure that citizens are informed and trust their government. In large, modern democracies there need to be continuous investments to see that democracy survives and that it does not only survive in name only as the "5,000" control things.

What would investments like this look like today? If I was writing this book ten or fifteen years ago I might have speculated on how the arrival of the Internet would allow citizens to be more connected to the affairs of government than ever before. Today that prediction would seem quaint. It

would be an exaggeration to say that the shift to Internet communication is the primary reason why Americans have grown more distrustful of their federal government; survey evidence shows that the decline in trust took place much earlier. But nor is there any evidence that new means of communication via the Internet have helped build trust.

To see the effect of social media communication, we may need to recognize the difference between the Early Republic and today. In the 1790s if they did not have access to newspapers, many citizens of the new United States had no real way of accessing information about their government. So, a new policy of state-subsidized newspaper distribution had a clear impact. Today the question is not one of having no information versus some—people can drown themselves in information (and disinformation) if they choose to do so. The key question is how the introduction of new technologies leads people to abandon older sources of information, perhaps changing the way they see government.

One of the clear trends in news access in recent years involves the disappearance of local news sources as new national sources emerge and as people substitute one source for another. The problem here is that local news sources report on both local and national developments, and people tend to trust local news media more than national news media. Local newspapers also help to foster democracy within communities. For various reasons, the structure of media markets may lead to the disappearance of local news sources that are deemed more trustworthy.[15]

A Return to Early Democracy?

Some scholars argue for stronger measures to tame a distant state that go well beyond simply reorganizing how people receive their news. The idea is to give citizens, and in particular non-elite citizens, a role in government beyond simply voting at election time. John McCormick, a political theorist, has advocated returning to certain features of governance present in city republics in Renaissance Italy that were supported by Niccolò Machiavelli. These include the use of assemblies that exclude elite members of society, appointment procedures that combine lottery with election, and finally possibilities for political trials conducted by citizens. One could also consider the reestablishment of independent mandates and

instructions for representatives of the sort that I have considered in this book. One could add the practice of recalling elected officials to the list. In fact, as North American colonists in places like Connecticut and Rhode Island first implemented such practices in assemblies, they drew direct inspiration from Machiavelli's writing.[16]

While a reintroduction of these measures associated with early democracy might be a possibility, we need to recall that whether it be in Italian city republics or in colonial American assemblies, these practices existed in small-scale settings. It is noteworthy that the smaller colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island were the pioneers here.[17] One would need to ask whether practices like these might be implemented, and with general satisfaction, in larger-scale societies today. The State of California's recent experience with citizen initiatives and recall of elected officials suggests that this might not be the case.

A better way to address the problem might be to see if modern technology can be used to create a tighter link between representatives and citizens. The key to this would not just be to have citizens provide their views; it would be to have them feel like they are actually participating in the process of government.[18] At the same time these methods would still be quite far from the face-to-face democracy that eminent scholars such as Jayne Mansbridge have emphasized helps promote unity while fulfilling the participative needs that are intrinsic to humans.[19]

Fear of a Strong State

The stability of early democracies was aided by the fact that they existed in the absence of central state coercion. The challenge of modern democracy is combining the core principle that the people should have power with the fact that day-to-day affairs of government are run by a strong bureaucratic state.

The Risk of State Strength in the United States

It is plausible that for a substantial time after the creation of the Republic, the protection afforded by a weak central state would have continued to hold. The new federal government had the right to raise its own taxes and to fund and maintain an army; these were provisions that the Anti-federalists thought would lead to tyranny, but by modern standards these fears seem quaint. The army used to deal with the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 would have been ill prepared to do something like suppress democracy throughout the country. The center just was not powerful enough.

The real question is how much risk there is that a modern state—like that in the United States today—could be used to establish autocratic rule. One plausible response to this is to say that in fact, the modern American state is simply too complex and unwieldy for anyone to successfully take it over. In making this argument Tyler Cowen has added that while the federal government is large in terms of the number of people it employs (2.1 million in 2013), most of these people are trained for tasks that are not particularly well suited for establishing autocracy.[20]

Though the U.S. federal workforce is not particularly well designed to serve autocratic purposes, there are important ways in which American presidents have very substantial power to act autonomously in a manner that some think poses risks to democracy. The irony here is that one would think that American presidents are hemmed in by legislative and judicial checks and balances so that this would not be possible. In 1960 Richard Neustadt famously argued that given the institutional constraints they faced, American presidents needed to rule by persuasion. This would be a bit like we have described rulers in an early democracy, as lacking any means to

rule unilaterally. But since that time, there has been a tremendous expansion of the ability of presidents to rule by executive order, and this is actually magnified by legislative checks and balances. When Congress is divided, presidents have more room to implement orders without seeing them overturned by legislation.[21] One of the ironies here is that these powers have sometimes been expanded by presidents who cannot be accused of having authoritarian tendencies, such as Barack Obama, only to have this expanded power then used by Donald Trump. Recall from chapter 6 that it was the centralization of imperial power under the enlightened emperors of the Song dynasty that paved the way for more arbitrary rule under the Ming.

The Importance of Sequencing

One of the other features we need to recall about state strength is that it is most prejudicial to democracy—either early or modern—when the state comes first. Over the long sweep of history, in areas where strong bureaucratic states emerged first, democracy has subsequently been less likely to appear. Jacob Hariri, a political scientist, has referred to this phenomenon as the "autocratic legacy of early statehood."[22] Take the case of Egypt where one could say that the Egyptian bureaucracy is five thousand years old—this must certainly weigh against possibilities for establishing democracy. Recall that when ISIS established control of much of Iraq, they were able to pursue a deliberate strategy of co-opting the existing Iraqi bureaucracy. Those who inherit strong states also tend to inherit autocracy.

The greatest reason not to fear, despite indications, for the future of democracy in the United States and Western Europe also involves reference to sequencing. With a long history of weak state bureaucracies, western Europeans and settlers in North America developed forms of consensual governance that have left very deep traces. As we say this, however, we should recall that Europeans are not unique in this regard. In Africa, today a legacy of prior state weakness and of early democracy may be precisely what is propelling modern democracy in a number of countries.

China as the Bureaucratic Alternative

Throughout this book, I have emphasized how China represents the starkest example of the bureaucratic alternative. In China the state arrived first and governance by consent never really followed. A central bureaucratic state evolved from a very early date—as early as the Zhou dynasty—and there was far less need to seek help from members of the society in governing than was the case in Europe. Outside invasions took place, even frequently, but they never completely broke the state as happened in Europe with the fall of Rome or in Greece with the downfall of the Bronze Age kingdoms that preceded the polis. In China outside invaders instead established themselves as new dynasties.

At the time of the Tiananmen Square protests thirty years ago Western observers sometimes suggested that economic development would necessarily push China in the direction of democracy. This would happen for two interrelated reasons. The first involved citizen demands—as China grew richer, citizens would demand democracy, and economic development would leave the state in a weaker position to resist this. The second reason involved the political regime necessary to deliver sustained growth. Ultimately, if Chinese leadership wanted development, they would need to democratize because that was the only political regime that could deliver the goods.

Today both of these arguments seem like relics of a more optimistic age, at least as far as Westerners are concerned. It is always easy to pass judgment on erroneous predictions like these, but in retrospect a deeper look at history might have led to different predictions, even in 1989. With a view to European history, we have a habit of thinking that economic development strengthens society and prompts rulers to govern by consent. This is precisely what happened with the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages and the rise of cities. But during the Song dynasty, China experienced a commercial revolution of its own at roughly the same time without any shift to governance based on consent—this was an era where central state power was strengthened. The Chinese state took advantage of rapid commercial growth by establishing an extensive bureaucracy for collecting indirect taxes. This contrasted starkly with the European pattern where monarchs lacked the bureaucracy necessary to collect taxes on their own—they instead bargained with towns that collected the taxes.

The parallels between China today and under the Song dynasty certainly are not perfect, but they are there. Rapid commercial growth has taken place, supported by significant state investment, and the state has recouped significant benefits. Centralized state control has also survived, and even been strengthened, as new technologies for communication arrived. During the Song dynasty woodblock printing expanded massively, and the state steered this in the direction it saw fit. So, technical manuals flowed freely but political texts were monitored and controlled. Today, sophisticated censorship from China's "Great Firewall" has helped produce a very similar outcome. Political information is strictly controlled but there is no such need to restrict the flow of scientific material.

The other thing to recognize about the Chinese model of political development is that an absence of consent does not imply an absence of accountability. From 1059 BCE onward Chinese emperors publicly pronounced the importance of the Mandate of Heaven. This was a convenient way for a current dynasty to explain why the preceding dynasty deserved to lose power, but it also set a performance standard for the future. There was no mechanism established for enforcing this mandate, but the fact that Chinese emperors first thought of this idea and that they continued to refer to it shows how even in an autocracy, a ruler can feel compelled to establish a performance standard.

In the end, China is not a deviation from the European pattern of political development; it is simply a different path that has its own logic to it and may well stay that way.

The Reasons for Optimism and Pessimism

If you are a supporter of democracy—as I am—then the message from this book may be that there is reason for hope. Humans have been ruling themselves in a collective fashion since the time they first established settled civilizations and before. Democracy is not something that only occurs at very specific moments, such as classical Athens, Renaissance Italy, and the United States of America. At the same time, we need to recognize that maintaining modern democracy involves two challenges that were not present in earlier variants. These are the risks of strong executive power and citizen distrust. Addressing these requires continual efforts and investments because we must remember that if in modern democracy participation is very broad, it also risks not being very deep. Finally, we need to remember that just because modern democracy survives does not mean that we will be happy with how it performs if the 5,000 dominate over the 5,000,000. Instead of only asking whether democracy will survive, we need to also ask whether we will be satisfied with the democracy that does survive.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A GREAT MANY PEOPLE have offered their advice, support, and direction during the period it took to research and write this book. I would like to first thank my editor, Bridget Flannery-McCoy, who improved this project in a great many ways. She was inspiring to work with. I would also like to thank Eric Crahan, who helped me shape this book in its early phases and who always offered encouragement. The series editor, Joel Mokyr, as always, offered insightful comments of the sort that only he can. At Princeton University Press, Alena Chekanov and Ali Parrington made the production process a very smooth one while James Schneider should be thanked for his great work on publicity. Finally, Jenn Backer made final improvements to the book with excellent copyediting.

Scholars from a variety of fields offered advice at various stages, in addition to reading the manuscript, and they did so very willingly even when I consulted them on questions on which they were far more expert than I am. This list includes Ali Ahmed, Bob Allen, Charles Angelucci, Kate Baldwin, Pablo Beramendi, Lisa Blaydes, Melani Cammett, Federica Carugati, Pat Egan, Jeff Frieden, Jack Goldstone, Sandy Gordon, Jessica Gottlieb, Bruce Grant, Anna Grzymala-Busse, Jason Qiang Guo, Jonathan Haidt, Phil Hoffman, James Kung, Timur Kuran, Margaret Levi, Daryl Levinson, Jennifer London, Bernard Manin, Isabela Mares, Jørgen Møller, Josh Ober, Tom Pepinsky, Steven Pincus, Pablo Querubin, Pia Raffler, Usama Rafi, Mara Revkin, Walter Scheidel, Ken Scheve, Mike Smith, Joanna Waley Cohen, Yuhua Wang, and Steven Wilkinson. I would also like to thank seminar audiences at Chicago, Duke, Harvard, McGill, Northwestern, NYU Law, NYU-Politics, Stanford, Utrecht, and Yale.

Numerous people offered excellent research assistance that helped make this book what it is, and this list includes Ali Ahmed, Mariana Alvarado, Jason Qiang Guo, Luyu Jin, Tine Paulsen, Alessandro Vecchiato, Jana Warshawsky, and Sidak Yntiso.

Finally, I would like to thank Lauren Brown for her companionship and support and my parents for all the encouragement and direction that they

have given me over the years. This book is dedicated to them.

NOTES

Chapter 1

1. The people we have come to know as the Hurons called themselves the Wendats. This account of their governance derives from the *Jesuit Relations* files, vol. 10, ch. 7, available at http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/. See a similar early description of the Iroquois in Colden (1727) 1958.

2. This is based on the account of Tlaxcala provided by Cortés in a letter to the emperor Charles V. For the text, see MacNutt 1908, 210.

3. See Ober 2008.

4. See Olivier 1969, 222. He refers to governance among the "Bantu" peoples, a term that can take on two very different meanings. In its scientific sense the word refers to all societies speaking languages from the Bantu family. This applies throughout southern and central Africa. In apartheid era South Africa "Bantu" was used to refer to all Black Africans.

5. On the idea of democracy being a common condition in human societies, see Goody 2006 and Isakhan and Stockwell 2011. This idea also relates closely to something that Roger Congleton (2001) has called the "king and council" template. See also Muhlberger and Paine 1993 and the exploration of collective and autocratic governance in human societies by Blanton and Fargher (2008, 2016). Scholars who work on classical Greek democracy sometimes also emphasize that many non-Greek societies had forms of consultative rule. See Lane 2014 as an example.

6. The canonical work on this idea comes from Margaret Levi (1988, 1997).

7. I will elaborate further on this idea in chapter 3. For a formal presentation, see Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming. This result is an illustration of the general insight that differential access to information can create a difference between formal and real authority within organizations. On this point, see Aghion and Tirole 1997; Baker, Gibbons, and Murphy 1999; and Barzel 2002, 1997.

8. See Blockmans 1998 for the original argument and Stasavage 2010 for empirical evidence.

9. The argument I make here is closely related to that made previously by Mayshar, Moav, and Neeman (2017).

10. Jared Diamond (1997) famously emphasized the influence of the natural environment on the development of states and societies. Rather than focusing primarily on whether a state forms, I will focus on what type of rule exists within a state. Stephen Haber (2012a, 2012b) has recently emphasized the effect of the environment on the development of democracy. See Goldstone 2009 for a concise discussion of how the natural environment, and in particular a less favorable environment for agriculture, influenced Europe's political and economic development.

11. See the theoretical framework and evidence presented by Sandra Vehrencamp (1983). I provide a more detailed discussion of this in chapter 3.

12. This tendency to distinguish between the one, the few, and the many was a very general one among Greek authors and not specific to Aristotle, even if he is best known for the distinction. See Hansen and Nielsen 2004, 80–86 for a review.

13. See Hansen and Nielsen 2004.

14. We know this from accounts of French Jesuit missionaries as discussed in chapter 2.

15. My account of Mari derives from Fleming 2004 and is discussed at length in chapter 2.

16. This claim is made by Hansen and Nielsen (2004, 84).

17. Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 4, chapter 9.

18. See Boserup 1965 for a canonical example of this use of the term. As I will discuss in chapter 3, intensive agriculture does not necessarily imply more productive agriculture in terms of total factor productivity. Total factor productivity is the ratio of output to all inputs, and not just land.

19. For Scott's three key contributions related to this subject, see Scott 1999, 2009, 2017. See the work by Nichols (2015), who makes this argument for ancient Mesoamerica.

20. Weber 1978, 987. Recent work by economists provides a theoretical framework to support Weber's assertion. Tim Besley and Torsten Persson (2011) have shown how constructing state capacity involves an important intertemporal trade-off. Rulers need to defer what could be current consumption (revenue) in order to invest in building state capacity.

21. In focusing on the relative strength or weakness of states and social actors the analysis I pursue here is related to that of Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2019). I should also emphasize that there is a long tradition of scholars arguing that governing jointly with representative assemblies allowed European rulers to achieve higher levels of revenue extraction and access to credit than would have otherwise been the case. What I will emphasize in this book is that this was the logical choice in an environment of state weakness. In other regions, such as China and the Middle East, rulers had another option: to rule through a bureaucracy and dispense with the need for a representative assembly. State strength made this latter option possible, and it was associated with substantially higher levels of revenue extraction. For the European case, see Bates and Lien 1985; Levi 1988; North and Weingast 1989; Dincecco 2011; and Stasavage 2011 for several examples. For a critique of this literature, see Boucoyannis 2015a, 2015b. She argues that representative assemblies instead emerged when powerful rulers compelled their subjects, and in particular their elite subjects, to attend assemblies and pay taxes. This argument fits rather closely with my interpretation of the English case as I will present it in chapters 5 and 9. However, I will also argue that England was exceptional among European parties in this regard.

22. In emphasizing the importance of Rome's fall I will parallel Walter Scheidel's recent (2019) contribution, though he focuses on the effect of political fragmentation above all, while I focus on state weakness.

23. The figure reports estimates of total revenue as a share of GDP for four separate states: China under the Song dynasty in 1086 CE, southern Iraq under the Abbasid Caliphate circa 850 CE, France under Philip the Fair circa 1300, and England in 1300 under Edward I. The revenue figure for the Abbasid Caliphate is based on data reported in Waines 1977 with GDP per capita estimates from Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014, population from Allen 2017, and exchange rates reported in Zarra-Nezhad 2004. Allen (2017) reports a slightly slower revenue figure for 846 CE that would imply an extraction rate of 6.2 percent. The revenue figure for France is from de Swarte 1885, 326. This includes an estimate of all of Philip's "extraordinary receipts." These can be considered taxes. Philip also received "ordinary receipts" from domains to which he held title. These are not included in the figure here because it is questionable whether to call them taxes. If we did include them, then we would need to deduct expenses on the royal domains to get a figure for net ordinary receipts. If we did this using the figure for net ordinary receipts offered in de Swarte 1885, 325, then French revenues would be 0.54 percent of GDP instead of the 0.49 percent reported in Figure 1.1. If we used the higher figure for net receipts reported in Clamageran 1867, 323, then French revenues would be 0.73 percent of GDP—so still less than 1 percent. The French revenue figure was expressed relative to GDP by converting *livres tournois* into silver, by using the estimate of the French population from Dupâquier 1988 and by using French GDP data from Ridolfi 2016. The revenue figure for China was collected by Jason Qiang Guo, and the original Chinese sources used are described in Guo 2019. It is very close to the figure derived separately by Liu (2015, 266) as well as that reported by Golas (2015). I chose 1086 CE as the latest date available to be more contemporaneous with the English and French data. At two points earlier in the Song the Chinese state actually collected 13 percent of

GDP in revenue. Evidence also suggests that the Song dynasty was not unique among Chinese dynasties in having a high capacity for fiscal extraction. See Liu 2015, 45, which compares taxes under the Song with the preceding dynasty, the Tang. The one key difference was that the Song relied on extensive indirect taxation of commerce whereas the Tang dynasty that preceded it relied exclusively on direct taxation of production. The revenue figure for England is reported in the Bank of England's "A Millennium of Macroeconomic Data for the UK" data set, based on revenue figures originally collected by Patrick O'Brien and Philip Hunt (1993). The GDP figure derives from Broadberry, Guan, and Li 2018 and is also reported in the same data set. See https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/research-datasets.

24. See Strayer 1980, 380. See also Strayer 1970.

25. See the numerous examples and sequence of events described in Strayer and Taylor 1939.

26. See Feng 2008, 89. See von Glahn 2016, chs. 1 and 2 for a discussion of Zhou government that emphasizes the patrimonial elements over the bureaucratic.

27. This argument was made by Patricia Crone (2001, 22).

28. Bernard Manin (1997) sees this as one of the main distinctions between modern representative democracy and alternative forms of democratic governance in the past.

29. This claim is made by Manin (1997, 163–67). Cases where candidates make explicit promises or propose some sort of a contract with voters would not count as mandates, since these may influence voter expectations and decisions, but they have no legal basis.

30. See the discussion in chapter 9.

31. See House of Commons Library 2013, 4.

32. See Vaughan and Vaughan 1997; Vaughan 2005; and the discussion in chapter 10. See also Painter 2010 for the flip side of the story—the invention and celebration of whiteness.

33. See Lipset 1959 for the classic statement.

34. See Boix 2011 for a recent statement of this view, buttressed by econometric evidence.

35. See Acemoglu et al. 2008 for the full statement of this view as well as econometric results that point in this direction.

36. See Philippon 2019 on this point.

37. This term was coined by Levitsky and Way (2002).

38. In making this argument I will draw on the work of Lisa Blaydes (2017).

39. On this point, see Baldwin 2015, as well as the evidence compiled by Baldwin and Holzinger (forthcoming). Magaloni, Díaz-Cayeros, and Euler (forthcoming) provide a targeted analysis of this in Oaxaca Mexico where public goods provision in some municipalities is controlled by traditional assemblies and in others by elected officials from political parties. On average the traditional assemblies performed better.

40. See Møller 2015 on the importance of sequencing in the opposite direction. In Europe institutions of consent preceded state development. See also Møller 2014 on how this ensured that Europe avoided having a hegemonic state.

41. See Møller 2015 on this point.

42. This idea that sequencing matters has been emphasized by Francis Fukuyama (2011).

Chapter 2

1. See Lowie 1954, 112.
2. See Hansen 1986 for the debate on when the word *demokratia* first appeared. See Hansen 2006 for a more general treatment of the Greek polis.
3. See Raaflaub 2007, 112.
4. See Robinson 2011, 1997 for a survey.
5. See Ober 2015, 125 for a concise description of these states and their rise and fall.
6. Ober 2015, 126–27. See Cline 2014 for the more general context across the Mediterranean and Middle East.
7. See Carpenter 1957.
8. Here I am relying on the views of Raaflaub (2013, 85–86). See also Raaflaub 2004 and Ober 1989, 55.
9. Cited in Raaflaub 2013, 85.
10. See Hansen 1991, 55–58.
11. We should also recognize that in terms of total population Athens was several times larger than any other polis in Greece, with a peak population of roughly 300,000 in 431 BCE. Hansen and Nielsen 2004.
12. Classicists have disagreed on the relative importance of these two bodies. See Ober 1989, 57 on the debate.
13. See Whitehead 1986 on the *demes* of Attica.
14. Whitehead 1986, 77.
15. See Raaflaub 2007 for an extensive discussion.
16. Raaflaub 2007, 149.
17. The translation here is from Raaflaub 2007, 123. Aristotle would later take a similar view. See Andreski 1968 for a more general argument about military organization and social inequality. He argues in favor of a link between these two features in many societies, as do Ferejohn and Rosenbluth (2017), who focus on war participation and democratization.
18. Garland 1987, 68.
19. Ferejohn and Rosenbluth (2017) have emphasized the importance of this case.
20. See Dahl 1998, 10–11.
21. See Jacobsen 1943 for the quote and other evidence.
22. See the discussion in Durand 2003; Fleming 2004; Seri 2006; Evans 1958; and Yoffee 1995. See also Bailkey 1967 and Barjamovic 2004.
23. See Fleming 2004, 233.
24. See Fleming 2004, particularly 60, 138, 165–71.
25. See the extensive discussion in Kleber 2017. This particular observation on assemblies comes from page 704 of his contribution.
26. See Fleming 2004, 6.
27. See Thapar 1984 for a discussion of the inaccurate ways in which early Indian history has been portrayed. Muhlberger (2008) provides a review of democracy in ancient India.
28. In his 1968 book on the subject, J. P. Sharma observed that the political context sometimes impeded objectivity in scholarship.
29. Rhys Davids 1922, 199.
30. Rhys Davids 1902, 17–19.
31. Rhys Davids 1902, 20.

32. Romila Thapar (1984) drew similar conclusions about the importance of assemblies, relying partly on Sharma's evidence.

33. Sharma 1952.

34. Sharma 1965.

35. Thapar 1984, 55.

36. *Jesuit Relations*. See also Gendron 1660 and the references in Heidenreich 1978.

37. This estimate is from Trigger 2002, 15.

38. Trigger 2002, 15–16. The map is available at http://www.oashuroniachapter.com/p/archaeologists-in-huronia.html.

39. *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 10, part 2, chapter 6, 231–33.

40. See *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 10, part 2, chapter 6. Elisabeth Tooker (1991, 48) states that young men between twenty-five and thirty did not participate unless it was a general council, in which case a special announcement was made.

41. Tooker 1991. See also Tooker 1984.

42. See *Jesuit Relations*, 17:161.

43. See Trigger 2002, 141–42.

44. Morgan 1851. See also Morgan (1877) 1985 and Tooker 1978.

45. See Engels (1884) 2010, ch. 2. See also Marx 1974.

46. See Stone 1976.

47. See Trigger 1978 and Hart 2001.

48. See Snow 1994, 15 for the Iroquois case and Divale 1974, 1984 for the more general argument.

49. See *Jesuit Relations*, 10:175.

50. Tooker 1991, 48, citing Shimony 1961, 89.

51. Trigger 2002, 87 emphasizes this point, suggesting that by their position within the household older women could ensure that male attendees at council conveyed their views.

52. MacNutt 1908, 210.

53. I will draw here on the work by Fargher, Blanton, and Espinoza (2017a) and Fargher, Espinoza, and Blanton (2011), who have done much to make the case that Tlaxcala was governed in a collective fashion. See also the earlier work by Gibson (1952).

54. Fargher, Blanton, and Espinoza 2010, 238. Fifty is the number of the group that came to see Cortés, but this may have been only part of the council.

55. See Fargher, Blanton, and Espinoza 2017a.

56. Working from post-conquest evidence, Gibson (1952, 148) suggests that "A simple domestic agriculture, with few crops and with the barest of equipment, comprised [the] subsistence economy for the bulk of the Indian population through the sixteenth century."

57. Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940) 2016.

58. Lugard 1922, 75–76.

59. In saying this, I should note that elements of early democracy were not specific to Central Africa. They also existed in East Africa (see Legesse 2000) as well as in southern Africa (Olivier 1969) and in West Africa. See Wilks 1975 and McCaskie 1995 for a discussion of council governance among the Ashanti.

60. Vansina 1990, 75. Sahlins 1963 remains the classic statement on "big man" societies.

61. This is discussed in Vansina 2004, 234. Auguste Verbeken's contemporary account from 1933 is the original source for this observation. For political developments elsewhere in Kasai, see Vansina 1998.

62. See Vansina 2004, 247. He conjectures that the periodicity observed here depended on the timing of initiation into the group of mature males.

63. This is suggested by Vansina (1990, 182), who notes that the *eata* system was supplanted by an alternative model after 1820.

64. For this view and evidence, see Baldwin 2015, 30, as well as Mamdani 1996.

65. See Vansina 1978, 129–31.

66. See Vansina 1978, 111–12.

67. See Steinkeller 1991.

68. See Steinkeller 1991.

69. The list here is provided by Steinkeller (1991). He also included temple reorganization in his list of ten reforms, but I have not included that in the list here because it does not generalize as well to many other societies.

70. This discussion is based principally on Smith 2012, ch. 7; Blanton, Fargher, and Espinoza 2017b; and Berdan 2017.

71. There are, however, archaeological remains showing similar patterns of settlement. This has been suggested by Fargher, Blanton, and Espinoza (2017b, 146).

72. Smith 2012, 69–77; Smith 2015, 74.

73. Smith 2015, 78–79.

74. Smith 2012, 164–65; Smith 2014.

75. See Berdan 2017, 444 for a description of this process.

76. See the discussion in Blanton and Fargher 2008.

77. Estimates reported by d'Altroy (2015b).

78. See Covey 2008 for the archaeological evidence on Inka origins.

79. See Isbell 2010 for the debate.

80. See d'Altroy 2015a, 2015b.

81. See d'Altroy 2015a, 2015b.

82. Based on archaeological evidence, Pauketat (2004, 79) suggests that the growth of the population was also very rapid, expanding in one or two generations from 1,400 to 2,800 individuals to 10,200 to 15,300 individuals. The lower estimate would have already represented a population larger than Iroquois or Huron settlements. The upper estimate would make Cahokia larger by more than an order of magnitude than Huron or Iroquois settlements.

83. This interpretation is proposed by Dalan et al. (2003, 173–74). These same authors emphasize this while also allowing for the possibility that the mound building might have reflected both a degree of coercion and a degree of celebratory expression. Their interpretation of the construction of the Champ de Mars in Paris derives from Schama 1989.

84. See Pauketat 2004 for the context. See Watts et al. 2016 for a broader discussion on human sacrifice as a means of maintaining social stratification.

85. See Boyd and Schroedl 1987 for a full discussion.

86. Gentleman of Elvas 1993, 93.

87. Hally 1994, 241, 245. See also the review article by Cobb (2003) on Mississippian chiefdoms.

88. See Le Page du Pratz 1774, 335–40.

89. In his words, "the Natchez are brought up in a most perfect submission to their sovereign; the authority which their princes exercise over them is absolutely despotic, and can be compared to nothing but that of the first Ottoman emperors." This reflected an inaccurate European view from the time about early Ottoman emperors being despots. See Le Page du Pratz 1774, 318.

90. This is the claim made by Muller (1997, 173).

91. Muller (1997) again presents a dissenting view.

92. I will rely for this account on the extensive ethnography provided by Evans-Pritchard (1971). He himself also used several earlier ethnographic accounts.

93. Evans Pritchard (1971, 234) refers to "visiting governors, visiting deputies, members of warrior companies, pages, oracle-operators, suppliants, parties to legal disputes, etc."

94. Prior to publishing the *Ethnographic Atlas* (Murdock 1967) and the Standard Cross Cultural Sample (Murdock and White 1969), Murdock had initiated the Human Relations Area Files project at Yale University.

95. Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming.

96. Council governance at levels higher than the individual community was coded by Tuden and Marshall (1972). They defined council governance as existing in two instances. The first was where "supreme decision-making authority is vested in a council, assembly, or other deliberative body with no single executive other than at best a presiding officer." The second was where "supreme decision-making authority is shared more or less equally by a single (or plural) executive and a deliberative body." The key alternative case was when "supreme decision-making authority is concentrated in a single authoritative leader." Council governance at the community level was coded by Murdock and Wilson (1972). They defined council governance as existing in two instances. The first was when "the community lacks a single political head but is governed collectively by a committee, a council, an age-grade organization, or the like." The second was when "the community has a single leader or headman with one or more functional assistants and/or a formal council or assembly, but lacks an elaborate or hierarchical political organization." The key alternative case when governance existed at the community level was where a single leader ruled.

97. The precise percentages are 55 percent and 34 percent. The contrast is even stronger if we only consider societies observed at earlier points in time. Among societies observed prior to 1900 we still see councils at the local level in 54 percent of the cases but at higher levels in only 23 percent of the cases.

98. See Blanton and Fargher 2016, 2008.

99. Marc Howard Ross (1983) coded a set of SCCS societies and arrived at the conclusion that in those with collective decision making, there was broad council participation in 67 percent of cases. Ember, Russett, and Ember (1993) reconsidered and expanded Ross's sample and arrived at a very similar conclusion.

100. See Bentzen, Hariri, and Robinson 2019 for an effort using the SCCS coding to examine whether societies that had a tradition prior to colonization of electing their leaders are more likely to be democratic today. They find that this is indeed the case. See also Giuliano and Nunn 2013.

101. See the different frequencies for female political participation provided by Ross (1983) and Sanday (1981). Sanday found that 57 percent of the societies that she coded had female political participation involving at least informal influence. Ross found that women had political participation equal or greater to men in 10 percent of cases, significant participation but not as great as men in a further 34 percent of cases, influence that was "not great" in another 24 percent of cases, and finally women were excluded in the remaining 32 percent of societies.

102. For an early exponent of this view, see Lippert 1931, 237.

103. Average female contribution to subsistence was 35 percent in societies with moderate to high female political participation as defined by Ross (1983). It was 32 percent in societies with low to no female political participation. This difference is not statistically significant. One sees a similar lack of a significant difference when using the measure of female political participation constructed by Sanday (1981).

104. This discussion of the Amazons can be found in Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 4, chapter 114.

105. Mayor 2014, 63.

106. This account can be found quoted in Jaimoukha 2001, 165.

107. See Whyte 1978, 36, 135.

108. See Flannery and Marcus 2012 for a fascinating exposition of this view.

109. In the raw data societies with councils are stratified 72 percent of the time and societies without councils are stratified 57 percent of the time. This difference is not statistically significant in any regression that includes controls for unobserved region effects.

110. For SCCS societies social stratification was coded by Murdock and Provost (1971). Their article states that they worked from the earlier classification scheme in Murdock 1967.

111. The data are reported in Kohler et al. 2017 and Smith et al. 2014. See also Kohler and Smith 2018 and the contributions therein.

112. Note this applies only to structures that survive, so there could be a source of bias here.

113. Note, strictly speaking the limitation that Milanovic, Lindert, and Williamson (2011) refer to involves taxation of income. However, this should logically also carry over into a limitation on wealth inequality.

114. Cowgill (2015) suggests an early collective form of governance that may have been superseded by a later despotic pattern.

115. See Kohler and Smith 2018, ch. 11.

Chapter 3

1. See North 1981. See Kiser and Karceski 2017 for a more general discussion of the political economy of taxation.

2. See Boas 1913.

3. See Vehrencamp 1983.

4. See Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming for a simple game theoretic model that illustrates this phenomenon.

5. See Aghion and Tirole 1997 for an exposition of how information can give someone informal power in this manner even when they lack formal power. Aghion and Tirole (1997) assume, somewhat unrealistically, that whoever receives the information can commit to an action. Baker, Gibbons, and Murphy (1999) consider the same question in the absence of commitment. See also the related discussion by Barzel (1997, 2002).

6. It has therefore been argued that tax farming emerged where bureaucracy was weak. See Levi 1988, 71–74. Johnson and Koyama (2014) consider an additional element of tax farming: rulers often relied on cabals of tax farmers to provide loans. A system like this could provide debt finance but at the cost of decreased information revelation because of reduced competition between tax farmers.

7. This idea has been emphasized by Diamond (1997). For an early proponent of this view, see Childe 1950. See Ang 2015 for a recent statistical effort. Olsson and Paik (2016) provide econometric evidence to suggest that regions that had an earlier transition to agriculture are actually poorer today than are areas that experienced a later transition to agriculture.

8. See Galor and Özak 2015, 2016.

9. In all analyses using caloric potential here, I will use the natural log of the value from the Galor and Özak data, adding 1 so that areas with caloric potential of zero still have a value that is defined. The alternative of using an inverse hyperbolic sine transformation (as opposed to log+1) produces nearly identical results. One further issue with this measure is that it excludes the potential contributions of livestock, which may be considered a very natural source of agricultural inputs for their manure. The results I report in this section are not substantially affected by restricting the analysis to societies where livestock were not used for manuring.

10. This difference is also statistically significant. In an OLS regression of central governance (binary) on a continuous measure of caloric potential, the coefficient on caloric potential is .027, and the standard error is .009. In this setting a one standard increase in caloric potential is associated with an eight-percentage-point increase in the probability of having central governance.

11. See Mayshar et al. 2017 for the theoretical argument and empirical results.

12. In an OLS regression of a variable for council governance on the continuous measure of caloric potential, the coefficient on caloric potential is statistically significant ($p = 0.044$) in a regression that includes no control variables, but the addition of controls either for region fixed effects or geographic coordinates (or both) results in a coefficient on caloric potential that is no longer statistically significant.

13. Huning and Wahl (2016) adopt a similar strategy.

14. The SCCS provides a single pinpoint location for each society but no information about the broader geographic boundaries within which the society existed. Given this, the measure of caloric variability was constructed by using localized variation between individual grid cells and then averaging this variation over a buffer of twenty kilometers around the societal pinpoint. All statistical results regarding the correlation between council presence and caloric variability were insensitive to the choice of either larger buffers of up to two hundred kilometers or small buffers down to zero kilometers.

15. See the work by Ahmed and Stasavage (forthcoming), who show that this correlation between council presence and caloric variability is statistically significant across a wide range of regression specifications.

16. See Jorgensen 1980 for a description of the Western North American Indian Data Set.

17. In the Native American societies that did not practice agriculture we should logically expect caloric variability to have less of an effect on council presence, and this in fact is the case. If we restrict the sample to those that did practice agriculture then we observe a statistically significant correlation between caloric variability and council presence in a regression that controls for geographic coordinates.

18. See the statistical results in Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming.

19. The term derives from the title of Crosby 1972.

20. See the statistical results in Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming.

21. See Ayittey 1991, 176; Greer Smith 1925; and Lowie 1927. See also Asiwaju 1976 and Barfield 1993.

22. See Allen 1997 for a discussion of circumscription in ancient Egypt. Trigger (1993) describes the earliest settlement patterns and their subsequent transformation.

23. See Knight and Steponaitis 2007 on Moundville. Gramly (1977) discusses how circumscription pressures might also emerge among foraging societies.

24. This would be supported by the evidence found in Gramly 1977, although that admittedly derives from the Northeastern Woodlands and not the western part of the North American continent.

25. This is based on the population estimates in Durand 1977.

26. With societies that fed themselves primarily from agricultural produce, we would not expect increases in population density to be associated with less council presence until much higher levels of density were reached. In the Standard Cross Cultural Sample, among societies that did not practice agriculture we see a result that parallels what we can see among Native Americans of western North America. Council presence becomes less likely once population density exceeds the low level of five people per square mile. Among societies that did practice agriculture, council presence only becomes less likely once a density of 500 people per square mile is reached. This is further evidence that early democracy was more likely when there was a possibility for people to exit.

27. See Engels (1884) 2010 for the first and Greer Smith 1925, 73–77 for discussion on the Great Plains.

28. The presence or absence of bureaucrats was coded by Martin Whyte (1978). For reasons of feasibility, Whyte coded this variable for only half of the Standard Cross Cultural Sample societies. Since he chose this subsample at random we should be less worried about sample selection bias than might otherwise be the case.

29. See the work by Ahmed and Stasavage (forthcoming), who provide statistical tests to support this conclusion.

30. See Erickson 2006 for the debate on this point. He emphasizes that while these "top-down" cases existed, in many other instances local people developed a system of intensive agricultural production on their own. Whether intensive agriculture emerges as part of a top-down or a bottom-up process does not matter for the argument I make here as long as, in either case, intensification makes production more legible to outsiders. Some have also argued that intensive agriculture, particularly if it involves irrigation, requires the presence of a bureaucratic state to manage it. In what follows I will tend to shy away from such arguments because historically many irrigation systems have been managed in a decentralized manner. Ostrom 1990 is a key reference here. See also Boix 2015 in his criticism of Wittfogel 1957, 89, 125. We will encounter Wittfogel at greater length in chapter 6.

31. English medieval wheat yields are from Titow 1972. Egyptian wheat yields (circa 2000 BCE) are from Miller 1991. Ur III barley yields are from Maekawa 1974. These are gross yields that do not

account for how much seed needed to be used to generate output. To take account of this we need to consider something commonly known as the yield-to-seed ratio. If one thinks in terms of the ratio between crop yielded and seed sown, then this figure was three to five times higher in Sumeria and China when compared with medieval England, and there is no reason to believe that England was unrepresentative for Europe at the time. The Chinese yields from the Tang dynasty are from Liu 2015, 27.

32. While many early authors, from Bloch (1966) and Duby (1972) onward, paint a picture where European agriculture was backward because of low yields, more recent work has qualified this conclusion, particularly for the early modern period. Hoffman (2000, 99) reports continuously rising total factor productivity of agriculture in many French provinces during this era.

33. See Boserup 1965.

34. See Vasey 1992, 183.

35. This is the title of chapter 8 of Boserup 1965.

Chapter 4

1. See Hoffman 2015.

2. For my discussion of soils and soil mapping I draw on Brevik and Hartemink 2010; Bockheim and Hartemink 2017; Hartemink, Krasilnikov, and Bockheim 2013; and Gong et al. 2001, 2003.

3. *Tribute of Yu* from the *Book of Documents*, as translated by James Legge (2016, 47).

4. See Gong et al. 2001, 2003.

5. See Yee 1994; Ho 1959, ch. 6.

6. See Brevik and Hartemink 2010, as well as Hartemink, Krasilnikov, and Bockheim 2013.

7. See the account of Ma Duanlin provided by Jaeyoon Song (2016).

8. As Margaret Levi (1997) has argued, even autocrats need some form of compliance from their subjects, and this is more likely to be achieved if individual subjects perceive that they are being treated the same as others.

9. This is reported with further discussion in Wang 2014, 141.

10. Martín Cortés, son of Hernán Cortés, observed that Aztec tax assessments depended on what sort of soil someone had. See Warkentin 2006, 36.

11. Winiwarter 2006a.

12. Winiwarter 2006a, 206. See also Winiwarter 2006b on soil science in ancient Rome.

13. With reference to the Domesday Book, Krupenikov (1992, 65) states, "One is surprised by the poor use of information regarding soils in the evaluation of estates and leases."

14. See Bodin 1576, 1:565.

15. Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 9, chapter 122.

16. Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 2, chapter 109.

17. See Friberg 2009, as well as Neugebauer 1945.

18. See Maitland 1907 for an early discussion of this.

19. See Mazoyer and Roudart 2006. I will rely heavily on their account in this subsection.

20. See von Glahn 2016, 131.

21. See White 1972; Bloch 1966.

22. Von Glahn 2016, 131–34.

23. Needham and Bray 1984, 154–55.

24. See Watson 1974 on Arab advances in irrigation and how they diffused in conquered territories, including those of Europe.

25. See White 1972.

26. The term comes from the title of Watson 1974. See Squatriti 2014 for a review of the debate about Watson's claims.

27. I am drawing on Watson 1995 here with further evidence from Glick 1982.

28. See Glick 1982.

29. See Urton 2017.

30. This is the view of Hans Nissen (1986), though his conjecture is based strictly on the preponderance of texts related to economic transactions and not any further information. See also Daniels 1996 on the origins of writing in different regions.

31. See Goody 1986, 103–4.

32. This comparative result holds when we count both formal systems of writing and analogous devices like the Inka *khipu* as "writing." If we adopt a stricter definition that only counts formal writing, then the difference between tuber and cereal societies is even starker. If we adopt a broader definition of "writing" that includes mnemonic devices, then the difference between tuber and cereal societies is smaller but still quite large.

33. This is based on Standard Cross Cultural Sample data combined with the Galor and Özak data on suitability of different crops.

34. See Diamond 1997, ch. 12.

35. See Pollock 1999, ch. 6.

36. The effect of distance from one of the three original societies is strongest when writing is defined narrowly to include only formal systems of writing and not equivalents or mnemonic devices. It is still apparent, however, with broader definitions. Though the statistical evidence in favor of the distance argument seems strong, there is a further potential problem lurking beneath the surface. The closer you were to a society that invented writing, the easier you might find it to copy this invention. However, societies that are closer together might also have all sorts of other things in common that would make them more or less likely to adopt writing. One way around this problem is to combine the demand and supply arguments for writing. If we see that societies located closer to writing's source are only more likely to adopt writing if they have agriculture based on cereals, then this greatly increases our confidence that distance is operating in the suggested way. It turns out that this is indeed the case. In a society located on land suitable only for cereals, a 100 percent increase in distance from writing's original source cuts the probability of having writing by 44 percentage points. In stark contrast, in a society located on land suitable only for tubers, the effect of increased distance on the likelihood of adopting writing is essentially zero. This result was obtained by considering the Standard Cross Cultural Sample societies and regressing a dummy indicator for the presence of writing on the log distance from a society to the closest location where writing originated, the relative caloric suitability for tubers and cereals, and an interaction term. Coefficients on all three variables were precisely estimated. See Ahmed and Stasavage, forthcoming for the details.

37. I adopted a broad definition of "writing" for this figure including formal writing, equivalents such as the *khipu*, and mnemonic devices. The pattern shown in the figure is still apparent when excluding mnemonic devices from the categorization.

38. See Pollock 1999, ch. 6.

39. I have drawn here on the recent survey by Given-Wilson (2016).

40. See Cross 1989. See also Colless 2014.

41. See Sanders 2004.

42. I am relying here on Cross 1989.

43. See Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 5, chapter 58.

44. See Sanders 2004.

45. See Hoffman 2015.

46. Hoffman 2015, 57–58.

Chapter 5

1. The question of Germanic versus classical influence on representative government was linked to a broader debate about the origins of the French nation. See Nicolet 2003 for a complete discussion.

2. In the original French the expression is "Ce beau système a été trouvé dans les bois."

3. This term is used by Guizot (1861, 14).

4. See Goffart 2006 on the ambiguity of these two terms for this time period.

5. Tacitus, *Germania* (Penguin Classics ed.), 38, 40, chs. 7, 11.

6. Julius Caesar, *Gallic Wars* 7.21. See O'Donnell 2019, 183 for a recent translation.

7. There has also been a debate over the misuse of Tacitus by later leaders to assert ideas of Germanic superiority. See Krebs 2011 for the full discussion of how this account came to be used to feed Nazi ideology during the twentieth century.

8. For two scholars who see it as a potentially accurate depiction of eighth-century practice, see Bass 1995 and Goldberg 1995. For the alternative, see Airlie 2003.

9. See the discussion in Rembold 2017, ch. 2.

10. This idea has recently been emphasized by Chris Wickham (2017) in his review of early European assemblies.

11. See Scheidel 2019.

12. See, for example, the classic description by A. H. M. Jones (1964, 712), who describes the multiple civitas as the "cells of which the empire was composed."

13. Jones 1964, 724–25.

14. Jones 1964, 1057.

15. See Kulikowski 2012 on the process through which Germanic kingdoms emerged after Rome's fall.

16. See Wickham 1984, 2005, 2009, 2016. Wickham 1984 emphasizes the collapse of the Roman system of taxation whereas Wickham 2005, 2009 stress more continuity, at least in the early phases. In a review of taxation in the different Germanic kingdoms Liebeschuetz (2015) places more emphasis on early decay.

17. See Ostrogorsky 1969, p. 245 in particular.

18. See Catt 2001 for a full discussion of the agricultural significance of Loess soil and how knowledge of it has evolved over time.

19. See Cunliffe 2011, ch. 4 for a concise discussion of the LBK culture and Shennan 2018 for a more complete recent treatment.

20. See Shennan 2018, 96–97.

21. Duby 1972, 190, 196.

22. See Postan 1973 and Bloch 1966. In the words of White (1972, 153), "The heavy plough, open fields, the new integration of agriculture and herding, three-field rotation, modern horse-harness, nailed horseshoes and the whipple tree combined into a total system of agrarian exploitation by the year 1100 to provide a zone of peasant prosperity stretching across Northern Europe from the Atlantic to the Dnieper." He then added, "During the next centuries there were no comparable improvements in agrarian technology, at least in the North."

23. This statement comes from the survey chapter on European agriculture in Duby 1972, 176.

24. See Duby 1972, 195.

25. This is based on a kernel density curve. The rescaling here, necessary because of Sumeria's much higher average yields, could be justified if a society with high average yields finds it easier to cope with higher absolute yield variability. In a society where Malthusian constraints bind perfectly,

one would expect this to actually not to be the case. High-yield areas would have larger populations, and so any dip in yields below the level needed for subsistence would mean that someone starved.

26. We can conclude this either based on a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, where the *p*-value for the null hypothesis was 0.12, or based on a Kruskal-Wallis test, where the *p*-value was 0.24.

27. See Bachrach 2016 and Murray 1988.

28. See Jones 1964, 238–65.

29. See Bachrach 2016.

30. See Bachrach 2016, 183. See Goffart 1972, 1982, 2008 on the shift from Roman to Merovingian taxation. See also Young 2017 on this issue.

31. See McKitterick 1983, 86.

32. See Guéry 1984, 2008 for the slow transformation from "gifts" into "taxes."

33. See Devroey 2012, 90.

34. See Lauwers 2012, 46.

35. See McKitterick 1983, 78.

36. See the discussion and references in Bachrach 2016, 171 and McKitterick 1983, 87.

37. I am relying here on the interpretation in McKitterick 1983, 87–88.

38. See Bloch 1961, 1:190–94.

39. On the Merovingian precedent, see Ganshof 1968, 23.

40. See McKitterick 1983, 94.

41. See McKitterick 1983, 95–96 for the countervailing evidence.

42. See in particular Davis 2015, 2017 on this point.

43. See Krause 1890.

44. See the discussion in Davis 2017.

45. Bachrach (2016) extrapolates from Krause (1890) to suggest that the *missi dominici* numbered in the dozens.

46. The area estimate is from Bachrach 2016, 182. The population figure of ten million here is only an educated guess, but even if this estimate were off by an order of magnitude, we would still conclude that the Carolingian Empire was very lightly administered. The figure of ten million was derived by taking the regional estimates in McEvedy and Jones 1978 for the year 800 for France, Germany, the Low Countries, Austria, and Italy, with the Italian figure divided by two to account for the fact that the empire only controlled northern Italy.

47. See McKitterick 1983, 96–97.

48. For the frequency of assemblies and their locations, see Rosenthal 1964.

49. See Davis 2015, 34–35 for a discussion and the quote.

50. See Airlie 2003 for a more extensive discussion, as well as Reynolds 1984 for a now classic discussion of governance in western Europe in the wake of the Carolingians.

51. Molyneaux (2015) provides a description of this process.

52. In what follows I will rely principally on Blair 1959; Stenton 1971; Loyn 1984, 1992; Campbell 1991; and Lambert 2017.

53. See Stubbs 1874, 1:104.

54. See Campbell 1975 for a full discussion of whether and how the hundred was borrowed from the Carolingians.

55. See Blair 1959, 232–39.

56. See Brookes and Reynolds 2011, 86–87.

57. See the work by Wickham (1997), who echoes an earlier claim made by Stenton (1971, 645). However, see also the discussion by Campbell (1975), who notes that several Carolingian rulers also raised taxes such as the Danegeld to pay off invaders. He speculates on the possibility that there was some learning between the Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian polities.

58. See Roach 2016.

59. Galbraith 1948, 45. See also Abraham 2013; Lawson 1984; Green 1981; and Wareham 2012.

60. Galbraith 1948, 29–30.

61. See the discussion in Naismith and Woodman 2018.

62. I base this conclusion on my reading of Blair 1959; Maddicott 2010; and especially Roach 2013. See also Roach 2016.

63. Post 1946 and Congar 1958 are the foundational studies on this topic. See also the survey in Monahan 1987. See Møller 2018 for an eloquent recent survey of how practices of representation and consent within the Catholic Church were adopted by secular rulers.

64. Stubbs 1875, 2:128–29. There were other constitutional principles that were also critical to state development in the medieval era. Among these was the idea that a state was an entity that had a life of its own after a king died. See Kantorowicz 1957 and the discussion of his work by North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009).

65. See Congar 1958, 25.

66. See Tierney 1982, 1983; Møller 2018; and Schwartzberg 2014.

67. See Congar 1958, 210.

68. Kay 2002, 96.

69. Kay 2002, 97.

70. Kay 2002, 98.

71. See the full decision of Honorius in Kay 2002, 538–43.

72. Kay 2002, 147.

73. See Maddicott 2010, 301–2.

74. "Confirmation of the Charters." Available at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/confcha.asp.

75. This passage is cited in Barratt 2004. See Burt 2013 for further background on governance under Edward I. Angelucci, Meraglia, and Voigtlaender (2019) document the inclusion of municipalities in Parliament and how this affected the evolution of the body over time.

76. The idea of representation in medieval Europe being alternatively a top-down or a bottom-up process is suggested by Wim Blockmans (1998). For histories of the communal movement, see Reynolds 1984; Petit-Dutaillis 1978; Prak 2018; the collection edited by Damen, Haemers, and Mann (2018); the classic accounts by de Lagarde (1939), Lousse (1937), and Pirenne (1910); and the evidence presented in Stasavage 2014, 2011, 2010.

77. Though see Angelucci, Meraglia, and Voigtlaender 2019 on how the partial autonomy of English towns contributed to parliamentary development over a course of centuries. See also Ormrod 1997 on this subject.

78. See Stasavage 2011 for the very different histories of borrowing by city-states and territorial states in Europe. See also Tracy 1994.

79. Pocock 1975, 74–75. See Skinner 2002 for a critique of Pocock's assertion and a suggestion that those who organized autonomous Italian cities may instead have been inspired by Roman thinkers, most notably Cicero.

80. This data set is described in Stasavage 2014.

81. See Wickham 2015 on this point.

82. Guizot (1838) suggested that the emergence of commerce led to towns seeking self-government. Abramson and Boix (forthcoming) and Boix (2015) find supportive empirical evidence. See Lopez 1976 for the classic historical account of the Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages. This line of argument also fits closely with Tilly's (1992) ideas about the role of capital and coercion in European history, as well as Rokkan's (1973, 1975) observations about cities and European state formation.

83. The data here derive from Bard et al. 2000 and were updated by these same authors in 2007. They measured total solar irradiance in watts per square meter based on frequency of deposits of Beryllium-10 in Antarctic ice cores. See Steinhilber et al. 2012 for similar results using an alternative method. Bard et al. (2000) suggest a potential link between total solar irradiation and the Medieval Warm Period. This issue is also discussed in Campbell 2016, 50–58.

84. These derive from Stasavage 2014. They are based on a set of 172 European cities that includes all cities that attained a population of ten thousand inhabitants by the year 1500.

85. See Stasavage 2016, 2011 for econometric evidence.

86. Carniello (2002) provides a useful discussion of early bureaucratic development in Bologna during the phase where it was still a commune.

87. This happened in Florence with the Medici and in the earlier case of Milan with the Visconti family.

88. See Stasavage 2018 for a survey of this phenomenon.

89. See Reynolds 1984, 164–65.

90. See Pirenne 1910 for an early view pointing in this direction and Reynolds 1984 for a more recent account. See also Wickham 2015.

91. See Kuran 2016 for the background.

92. See Tierney 1982. See also Tierney 1983.

93. See Post 1964, 71 on this debate, as well as Møller 2018. See also Bisson 1964, 1973, 1977, 1996, 2009 and Kosto 2003 for the more general context in Catalonia and elsewhere. See Møller 2017b for a recent comprehensive view of the evolution of representation in Aragon.

94. See Post 1964, 77.

95. This is the date at which Marongiu (1968, 67) suggests that the practice began. See also Marongiu 1975.

96. See Post 1964, ch. 2.

97. See Holden 1930, 900.

98. Holden 1930.

99. See Ulph 1951.

100. See Post 1943, 359–60.

101. See Post 1943, 370.

102. Both Decoster (2002) and Strayer (1980) use this term to describe Philip's assemblies. See also Villers 1984.

103. This is mentioned in both Post 1964 and Congar 1958. However, Decoster (2008, 70–72) demonstrates that Philip the Fair employed the phrase in an idiosyncratic way so that it would not pose a threat to royal power.

104. Decoster 2008, 141–45.

105. See Decoster 2008, 176–93.

106. See Scordia 2005 for a particularly interesting and extensive exploration of the idea.

107. See Strayer and Taylor 1939.

108. On this point in addition to Strayer 1980, see Guenée 1971, 201–4.

109. De Swarte 1885.

110. Here I will rely heavily on the accounts by Carsten (1954, 1959) and Clark (2006).

111. This argument is most directly associated with Downing 1992.

112. See Møller 2017, 198–99 for a review.

113. See Carsten 1954 for a description of Brandenburg during this early period.

114. See Clark 2006, 28 on this point.

115. See Carsten 1954, 180–81 and Clark 2006, 28 on this episode.

116. See Carsten 1954, 181–83.

117. See Carsten 1954, 216.
118. This is a point that both Downing (1992) and Ertman (1997) emphasize.

Chapter 6

1. See the discussion by Sarah Allan (2017) on historical evidence supporting the *Tribute of Yu*. Recently discovered evidence of a major flood in 1920 BCE has been presented by Wu et al. (2016) as supporting the historicity of both this text and the Xia dynasty, but the *Tribute of Yu* text does not refer to a specific flood that Yu contained.

2. See Feng 2013, ch. 3. The population estimates are from Feng.

3. Here I will rely on the accounts provided by Keightley (2000, 1983) and Feng (2013). Keightley is more supportive of the idea that there was an incipient Shang bureaucracy, while Feng is more reticent on this point.

4. Feng 2013, 69.

5. Feng 2013, 71.

6. Feng 2013, 69.

7. Keightley 2000, 56.

8. See Feng 2013, 103 and Keightley 2000.

9. On the link to the ancestors, see Keightley 2000, 98–99.

10. See Keightley 2000, 2–3.

11. Keightley 1999, 278.

12. See Keightley 1999.

13. See Chang 1980, 237.

14. See Keightley 1999 for the idea of an incipient bureaucracy and Lin 1982 for an extensive discussion of different titles referred to in the Shang oracle bones.

15. Keightley 1983, 548.

16. Sarah Allan (2015, 268) suggests that "since the discovery of oracle bones and the last Shang capital at Yinxu, some scholars have considered the 'Pan Geng' to have been authenticated and take it as a contemporaneous text, even though it is linguistically very different from oracle bones inscriptions."

17. *Pan Geng I* from the *Book of Documents* as translated by James Legge (2016, 98).

18. The five pacers are Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. See Pankenier 1995 on the "Cosmo-Political" background of the Mandate of Heaven. This episode is also discussed in Feng 2013, 117–19.

19. See the evidence provided in de Meis and Meeus 1994.

20. See Xinhui 2015, 6.

21. See Xinhui 2015 for an extensive and fascinating account of this evolution.

22. Lewis 1990, 236.

23. As quoted in Kuhn 2009, 10.

24. See Ostrom 1990 for the general statement and Ostrom and Gardner 1993 for the specific case of irrigation.

25. Needham and Bray 1984, 9, 30.

26. See Wang et al. 2018. Early use of manure was not unique to China. See Bogaard et al. 2013 for the European evidence on early manure use.

27. See Jia et al. 2012, as well as Lee et al. 2007 and Chang 1999.

28. See the discussion in Gong et al. 2001.

29. This point is emphasized by Trigger (2003, 283).

30. Mark Elvin has even proposed that Chinese state formation may have had a negative impact on human welfare. However, the overall welfare evidence he cites does not apply specifically to China. See Elvin 2004, ch. 5.

31. See Feng 2003 for a description of the background.
32. See Feng 2008, 89.
33. Feng 2008, 180. Note, this is a term from the Eastern Zhou period.
34. See Lewis 2000 for an extensive discussion of this question.
35. See Lewis 2006, 144.
36. Hui 2005, 197.
37. Lewis 2000, 369.
38. Lewis 1990, 48–49. See also Pines 2009, ch. 8.
39. See Allan 2015.
40. See Allan 2015, 21–22 on how this event has been presented and interpreted.
41. Allan 2015, 89.
42. Von Falkenhausen 2006, 394–95.
43. This is Sarah Allan's (2015) interpretation.
44. I am relying for this account on Lewis 1999b. The Warring States period involved a conflict between seven principal territorial states around the Yellow River in north China.
45. See Lewis 1999b for a description.
46. See Lewis 1999b, 622.
47. See Bielenstein 1980, 114.
48. For a complete description of this abolition and the motivations for it, see Lewis 2000.
49. Though see the work by Hui (2005), who emphasizes provisions of benefits to the populace but not political rights.
50. As reported in Bielenstein 1980, 156.
51. The population figure is from Bielenstein 1980, 206.
52. See Scheidel 2006 for discussion.
53. Bielenstein 1980, 134.
54. For further elaboration on this idea, see Hao and Xi 2019.
55. See Teng 1943.
56. See Hsia 2010, 166 for this description. "To his friend and former companion in the Roman College, the Jesuit Lelio Passionei, Ricci described in detail the imperial civil service examination, which he witnessed in Nanchang. Even though China was governed by an emperor, 'it is rather more a republic than a monarchy, since no relative of the emperor … holds any office in the realm.… The government of the realm is entirely in the hands of the literati.' "
57. Lewis 2009a, 202–6. On the initial rise of the "great families," see Lewis 2009b, 28–54.
58. Bourdieu and Passeron 1969.
59. See Tackett 2014.
60. See Chen, Guo, and Greif 2018.
61. See Johnson 1977.
62. See Chen, Kung, and Ma 2019.
63. See Yoshinobu 1970 for an extensive discussion of commerce and commercial practices at this time.
64. Ma 1971, 66.
65. See Guo 2019.
66. See Hartman 2015, 50 for a description of the different categories of Song officialdom. See also Smith 2009, 349 for an estimate.
67. See Hartman 2015, 53 as well as Ma 1971, 110–11.
68. As reported in Broadberry, Guan, and Li 2018. Kuhn (2009, 125) reports a higher figure of 101 million earlier in the dynasty, with population falling to 63 million in the latter part of the dynasty.

69. This would be based on the population estimate of 10 million derived from the individual region estimates in McEvedy and Jones 1978, to which I referred in chapter 5.

70. Grummitt and Lassalmonie 2015, 124. The number of top French financial officials increased to "less than a hundred" under Louis XII, who ruled from 1498 to 1515, but this was still a remarkably small number.

71. See Hartman 2015, particularly 39–40, 84, 98, 112.

72. See Fletcher 1986, 14.

73. See Fletcher 1986, 15.

74. See Rossabi 2005, 6.

75. See Brook 2010, 79–81 for further discussion.

76. See Rossabi 2005, 224.

77. See Ma and Rubin 2017 for one recent interesting exploration of Chinese absolutism and its consequences for revenue generation.

78. See Broadberry, Guan, and Li 2018 for the GDP data.

79. Wong 2012.

80. See Wong 2012, particularly 354–55. See also Farmer 1995.

81. Bank of England, "A Millennium of Macroeconomic Data for the UK," https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/research-datasets.

82. I am drawing here on the analysis in Huang (1974, 1998). See Rosenthal and Wong 2011 and Dincecco and Wang 2018 for related claims about external threats.

83. The term is from Huang 1998, 106. See also Farmer 1995, ch. 4.

84. See Hoffman 2015 for these data as well as statistics for other states.

85. See Dincecco and Wang 2018.

86. See Ko, Koyama, and Sng 2018 on how this fostered a different model of political development when compared with Europe. See also Ma 2012 on the implications of imperial unity and weak external threats.

87. Farmer 1995, 33.

88. See Rowe 2009, 43–44, 66. Spence (2002) suggests that an additional motivation for the tax freeze was to get local bureaucrats to accurately report population levels.

89. Spence 2002, 178.

90. See Sng 2014.

91. See Ma and Rubin 2017 for this comparison.

92. See von Glahn 2016, ch. 9 for a review of the evidence.

93. See W. Wang 2014, 41–45.

94. See Rowe 2009, 155–57 for a concise description. For a more extensive discussion, see Jones and Kuhn 1978.

95. See Kuhn 1978 for a detailed account of the Taiping Rebellion.

96. See von Glahn 2016, ch. 9.

Chapter 7

1. See Lancaster and Lancaster 2004, 37.
2. Marsham 2009, 26–27.
3. See Lancaster and Lancaster 2004, 37.
4. This quote can be found in Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 3, chapter 8.
5. Marsham 2009, 28.
6. See Lecker 2004.
7. Marsham 2009, 32.
8. See C. E. Bosworth, "Shura," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W. P. Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill Reference, 2012).
9. Koran 3:159.
10. Koran 42:38.
11. See Bernard Lewis, "Mashwara," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*.
12. See Crone 2001.
13. Crone 2001. See also Crone and Hinds 2003 on critiques of autocratic rule.
14. See Browers 2006 on how these efforts to invoke *shura* continue in the Middle East today.
15. See Crone 1999.
16. Crone 2001. See also Crone 2000.
17. See Lewis, "Mashwara."
18. See Schaeder 2017.
19. Wiesehofer 2010, 115, 121. He suggests that "the status of a Parthian or Persian aristocrat was, for a long time, virtually independent of the king's favour."
20. See Wiesehofer 2010.
21. Morony 1984, 99–100.
22. Milwright 2010, 669–70.
23. See Lokkegaard 1950 for a full discussion of the Sasanian inheritance and subsequent changes to tax administration under the caliphate. See also Lukonin 1983 on Sasanian institutions.
24. This is a main conclusion drawn by Campopiano (2012).
25. See Allen 2017, table 1.
26. See London 2011 and Darling 2012, ch. 1.
27. Here I draw on Sijpesteijn 2013, 35–38.
28. Sijpesteijn 2013, 38.
29. See Sijpesteijn 2013, 64–66, 86, and Sijpesteijn 2007, as well as Brett 2010.
30. Though early Islamic governance in Egypt resembled that in Iraq, there was one further difference. In Iraq the Islamic conquerors maintained and expanded an existing system for the direct taxation of agricultural produce. In Egypt the Islamic conquerors also implemented a poll tax, from which they derived substantial revenues. Sijpesteijn 2013, 72. See also Brett 2010, 551.
31. In this section I rely heavily on Kennedy 1996, in addition to the other sources cited.
32. The Ervigian code of 681 CE attempted to portray a theocratic style of kingship with the king as God's terrestrial agent. King 1972, 23–24.
33. See Stocking 2000, 15–16. See also Barbero and Loring 2005 on this subject. See also Wickham 2009, 135.
34. We should acknowledge that Visigothic councils aided with tax collection—there is reference to tax collectors and direct taxes on land in the early years. See Stocking 2000, 98 for the limited evidence that Visigothic councils played a role with regard to revenue. See also Barbero and Loring 2005.

35. See Kennedy 1996, 20.
36. Barcelo 1984.
37. See Kennedy 1996, 107.
38. On this collapse, see Moreno 2010 as well as Kennedy 2004.
39. See Blaydes and Chaney 2013 on this point.
40. Patricia Crone (2001) took this view.
41. See Chaney 2012; Rowley and Smith 2009. See also Diamond 2010 for a discussion of this point, as well as Ahmed 2019.
42. See Cammett 2018 and Thompson 2013.
43. See Yom 2015 and Brownlee 2012.
44. Lisa Blaydes (2017) has recently produced a review of state building—and persistence—in the Middle East that emphasizes precisely this point.
45. Al Tamimi 2015, ch. 6. See Revkin 2018, 128. Note that the end goal here is not to construct a state but to instead co-opt the existing elements of a state as a way to help construct a new caliphate.

Chapter 8

1. A partial list of scholars who make this argument includes North and Thomas (1973), North (1981), Jones (1981), North and Weingast (1989), North (1995), Bates and Lien (1985), Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2005), Dincecco (2011), Cox (2016, 2017), and DeLong and Shleifer (1993). For some works that are critical of this argument, see Clark 1996; Epstein 2000a, 2000b; Abramson and Boix, forthcoming; and Boix 2015.

2. See Scheidel 2019 for the most recent and definitive statement on this issue.

3. Here the most recent evidence suggests that if a country switches from autocracy to democracy, this will add half a percentage point to its annual growth rate in the short term. The long-run effect will be a 20 percent increase in the size of the economy. This is a sizable effect but certainly not a large enough effect to explain something like the gap in per capita GDP between the United States and China today. See Acemoglu et al. 2019 for this result. Earlier studies, such as Barro 1996 and Przeworski et al. 2000, failed to find an effect of democracy on growth.

4. See Pomeranz 2000. He coined the term "The Great Divergence" with his book of the same name.

5. I should note here that some authors also refer to a "Little Divergence," which was a divergence in levels of development between different European regions prior to the Industrial Revolution. See de Pleijt and van Zanden 2016 for an exploration of this phenomenon.

6. These estimates have been produced by Broadberry, Guan, and Li (2018). See Deng and O'Brien 2016 for an alternative set of estimates, as well as Deng 2003 for further discussion.

7. These estimates derive from Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014.

8. The figure shows per capita GDP estimates in 1990 international dollars. The data are grouped into approximate dates for purposes of comparison. Exact dates and sources are as follows. For England 1090, 1300, 1500, and 1800 as reported by Broadberry et al. 2011. The original source for 1090 is Walker 2015. For China, 1090, 1500, and 1800. The figure for 1300 for China is interpolated based on figures for 1120 and 1400. The source for China is Broadberry, Guan, and Li 2018. For Abbasid Iraq, 760, 1060, and 1220 as reported in Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014. For 1800 I used the figure reported in Bolt and van Zanden 2014 for Iraq and interpolated the figure for 1500. For 1820, Pamuk (2018, 27) reports a slightly higher number for the Ottoman Empire of 720 dollars.

9. Many scholars have used urbanization estimates as a proxy for development in preindustrial societies. For western Europe, they have made use of the data on historical city populations compiled by Paul Bairoch, Jean Batou, and Pierre Chèvre (1988) covering the period between 800 and 1850. These authors also report historical rates of urbanization where total city population within a given territory is divided by estimates of the total population. Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden (2013) extended this effort by including population estimates for cities in the Middle East and North Africa over the same time period. By making use of city population data from these two sources and estimates of total populations from McEvedy and Jones 1978, one can produce estimated urbanization rates by century for western Europe and the Middle East and Maghreb. Finally, Xu, van Leeuwen, and van Zanden (2013) have recently produced estimates of historical urbanization in China.

10. See Allen et al. 2011, figure 5.

11. See the accounting of Soviet growth and decline in Easterly and Fischer 1995.

12. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) draw this conclusion in their study of societies with inclusive and extractive institutions.

13. See Watson 1983, 2–3. See also Watson 1974, 1995.

14. See the insightful account of this development in Kuran 2005, 2011, 2013, and 2018, as well as Rubin 2017. See Cammett 2018 for a review of Kuran and critics who emphasize that institutional inefficiency in the Middle East may have stemmed less from the absence of the supply of the right institutions than from weak demand for them.

15. According to Randolph Barker (2012), who formerly served at the International Rice Research Institute, the introduction of Champa rice into China "led to a revolution in agriculture not unlike the modern-day green revolution." See also Golas 1980; Deng and Zheng 2015. These authors emphasize that while conventional accounts suggest that double cropping of rice began as soon as the Champa rice strain was introduced, it took considerably more time for this practice to become widespread.

16. Kuhn 2009, 40–43. See also Hymes 2015 on the overall environment for printing during the Tang and Song dynasties, as well as Twitchett 1983; Carter 1955; and Wei Ze 1995.

17. Hartwell 1966, 1962.

18. See Yoshinobu 1970 for water transport and Elvin 1973 for market structure.

19. Needham 1969, 16.

20. This argument is made in Lin 1995.

21. See Needham and Ling 1965, 446–47.

22. Recently, Joel Mokyr (2017) and Deirdre McCloskey (2016) have made arguments that push in the same direction, in particular regarding enlightenment attitudes, culture, and thinking. See also Mokyr 2014, 2009, 1990. Jack Goldstone (2002) emphasizes the specificity of England and the scientific culture that emerged there after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. See also Goldstone 2009, 2006.

23. The support for this claim is provided by Tackett (2014).

24. Kuhn 2009, 38.

25. Liu 2015, 109.

26. Liu 2015, 110.

27. Cao 1997, 472–73.

28. Liu 2015, ch. 8.

29. See Shatzmiller 2011.

30. This feature is discussed by Chaney (2016), who also considers the reasons for the subsequent decline in Islamic scientific production. Gutas (1998) considers the Graeco-Arabic translation movement in detail.

31. The figure reports average duration of reign in six dynasties across China, the Middle East, and Europe. The horizontal line represents the mean value across the six dynasties. England includes all Norman and Plantagenet monarchs between 1066 and 1399. France includes all Capetian monarchs between 987 and 1328. China includes all emperors of the Song dynasty between 960 and 1274. Early Abbasid includes all caliphs between 750 and 946. Later Abbasid includes all caliphs between 946 and 1258. Sasanian includes all Sasanian rulers between 224 and 628. See Wang 2017 for a discussion of how the Chinese succession rule of an emperor nominating a crown prince was associated with greater ruler duration than in other regions.

32. Allen (2017) follows Blaydes and Chaney (2013) in emphasizing the role of institutional constraints. Blaydes and Chaney contest the notion that it was primogeniture that made the difference. See also Acharya and Lee 2019; Wang 2017; and Kokkonen and Sundell 2014.

33. Kennedy 2004.

34. This is the argument presented by Waines (1977). This pattern of decline has been documented using more recent evidence by Allen (2017).

35. Kennedy 2004.

36. See Stasavage 2015 for a discussion of how and why public debt first emerged in Europe and not elsewhere.

37. See Veitch 1986 on the example of medieval repudiations and North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009 for arguments linking these specific financial examples to a more general insecurity of property rights.

38. There is some indication that in doing so Philip was trying to match the behavior of his English contemporary, Edward I, who in July 1290 had signed an Edict of Expulsion that banned all Jews from England.

39. See Strayer 1980.

40. See Epstein 2000a, 2000b and Stasavage 2014, as well as Acemoglu 2008 for a theoretical model related to this same idea. See also the more general argument made by van Bavel (2016) that where markets generate growth, but growth comes with inequality, inequality then allows those with greater resources to erect barriers to entry into markets. See also van Bavel 2010.

41. For the modern econometric analysis to support this argument, see Acemoglu et al. 2011. See also Grab 2003.

42. These data were collected for and are reported on fully in Stasavage 2011, 2010. They cover a set of twenty-four European polities.

43. This figure reports estimated urbanization rates for a set of twenty-four European polities dividing between those that had a representative assembly with power over taxation and those polities that either lacked an assembly or had an assembly that lacked this privilege. Assembly coding is based on Stasavage 2011, 2010. Urbanization rates are those reported by Bairoch, Batou, and Chèvre (1988) based on modern country boundaries. In some cases, this results in a discrepancy between the modern boundary used to measure urbanization and the relevant historical boundary.

44. I should note that the early correlation between assemblies and urbanization might also reflect the reverse phenomenon whereby elites in more heavily urbanized areas found themselves in a better position to demand representation. It might also reflect changes in the sample of states as some states disappeared or as some states shifted from strong representation to weak representation or the reverse.

45. See Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden 2013.

Chapter 9

1. Bede, Book 1, chapter 15. Bede was himself relying on an early, sixth-century chronicler named Gildas.

2. See Leslie et al. 2015 and the broader discussion in Crabtree 2018.

3. See the evidence in Heather 2009, ch. 6.

4. I have relied for this account on Lambert 2017; Loyn 1992; and Blair 1959.

5. See Loyn 1992, 131–32.

6. See Lambert 2017, 247–50.

7. Blair (1959, 233) remarks that in Scandinavian history and literature it was common to have twelve "doomsmen."

8. Decree declared at a meeting of the *witan* at Exeter. As quoted in Loyn 1992, 116.

9. See Lambert 2017, 251 and onward as well as Blair 1959, 223 and onward.

10. See the first chapter of Maddicott 2010.

11. See Roach 2013, 32, as well as Maddicott 2010, 5.

12. See Blair 1959, 214–21.

13. See Roach 2013.

14. Galbraith 1948, 36, 56–57. In his words, "Long before the Norman Conquest, then, the Saxon kings had a secretariat of their own, and the first great step had been taken towards bureaucratic government." He noted also that William the Conqueror, who had no bureaucracy in Normandy, inherited this bureaucracy.

15. See Roffe 2000, 2007 for one view in the debate on how to interpret the Domesday records.

16. For both the discussion of existing tax lists and the use of vernacular I am drawing here on the work of Campbell (1975), who himself draws on Harvey 1971.

17. Maddicott 2010, 4–5. The term "parliament" would not be used until the thirteenth century to describe councils such as these. See Brand 2009, 10.

18. Stubbs 1874–78, 1:572.

19. The most prominent recent historian of Magna Carta has argued precisely this. See Holt 2015, 51. Møller (2017a, 71) emphasizes that Marc Bloch, the great French historian, made the same observation.

20. Holt 2015, 51.

21. Holt 2015, 51.

22. See Bonis 1965 on the evolution of the Hungarian Feudal Diet.

23. For an early example of the reference to "heavy exactions," see Andrews 1921, 116.

24. This is based on the same data that I first reported in Figure 1.1. Prior to 1086 we have evidence that Song monarchs collected levels of revenue higher than 10 percent of GDP, but I am using the 10 percent figure here to be more contemporaneous with the English data.

25. See Barratt 1996, which provides a full assessment of revenues during John's reign and concludes that revenues in most years were in the range of 30,000 pounds with exceptions for one-off measures. See page 839 in particular. See also Barratt 1999 for a comparison of the revenues of King John with those of Phillip Augustus of France. I have omitted figures for the Thirteenth of 1207 (a tax on wealth) because that was collected over a period of years.

26. We have an estimate of English nominal GDP at the time of the Domesday Book (1086) and in 1290 from Broadberry et al. 2011 but no estimates in between. Linear interpolation between these two dates gives a GDP figure of roughly three million pounds during King John's reign.

27. In 1542 to be precise according to the Bank of England's "A Millennium of Macroeconomic Data for the UK," https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/research-datasets.

28. See Gilissen 1966, 419.
29. Post 1964 remains the classic statement on this.
30. Fletcher 2015, 223.
31. See Stasavage 2011.
32. See Koenigsberger 1992 for this argument.
33. See Edwards 1934, 137.
34. http://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/primary-source-45-model-parliament.pdf.
35. Edwards 1934, 136.
36. See Fletcher 2015, 222 for a comparison between France and England. Monarchs in each kingdom sought to establish *plena potestas*, but only English monarchs were successful in doing so. See Harriss 1963 for the context in which members of the Commons in 1339 asked to refer back to their constituencies. The article by Edwards (1934) provides useful historical background on the evolution of the full powers concept up to 1295. Maddicott (2010, 417) argues that the establishment of *plena potestas* made for a much more integrated state in England. See also Payling 2009. There was one further exceptional episode when reference back to constituencies happened, and this was following the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.
37. See Harriss 1963, 638.
38. Stubbs 1900, 283.
39. The most important work here is Elton 1953. The quote is from page 2. See also Elton 1955, 1960.
40. See Hurstfield 1967.
41. See Stone 1972, 65.
42. For a succinct summary of this idea, see in particular the final chapter of Elton 1953.
43. See Elton 1953, 416.
44. This is the interpretation in Elton 1953.
45. See Stone 1972, 65. He also emphasizes Henry's need for parliamentary support in Henry's conflicts with the Catholic Church as well as desperate need for revenue following a disastrous military expedition in France.
46. See Hurstfield 1967, 93 for this view. See Bush 1983 for a very extensive discussion of this episode that supports a similar interpretation. See Elton 1955, 174 for the view that the Act was not at all about establishing despotism.
47. It was exercised a very limited number of times by William III, only once by Queen Anne, and not at all by George I. See Stasavage 2003, 73 and Williams 1939 for further detail.
48. See Williams 1939.
49. See Pincus 2009 for the authoritative historical account of the revolutionary character of the events of 1688. North and Weingast (1989) famously pioneered the interpretation that the Glorious Revolution saw an establishment of limited government that had profound, and positive, economic consequences. Subsequent institutional innovations enhancing credibility have been explored by Cox (2016, 2017).
50. Goldstone 2006.
51. See Hoppit 1996, 109.
52. See Bogart 2005a, 2005b, 2005c. See also Pawson 1977 for more on the historical background.
53. Blackstone 1768, book 1, pp. 160–61.
54. See Knights 2005 for a definitive account of this episode.
55. See Stasavage 2003 on the evolution of the number of placemen over time.
56. The quote is from the *London Journal*. It can be found in Kramnick 1968, 121. In chapter 5 of his book Kramnick provides a general overview of Walpole's political thinking and practices.

57. Available at https://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/summer03/wilkes.cfm.

58. See Price 1994 for an extensive review.

59. As Maarten Prak (1997) recounts, in the Dutch Republic one was first and foremost a citizen of one's individual hometown, and this generally came with significant restrictions on the ability of outsiders to gain citizenship. As van Zanden and van Riel (2004) note, this was a pattern of political representation that was not specific to the Netherlands; it was common to much of ancien régime Europe. Mark Dincecco (2011) has shown how this decentralized, fragmented institutional setup also impeded revenue generation.

60. See van Bavel 2016 on this point.

61. I am relying on the fascinating and amusing account provided by Grever (1982) here.

62. The reference to the Dutch Republic as the "first modern economy" was made by de Vries and van de Woude (1997).

63. Joel Mokyr (2000) has previously used this pair of cases to compare scientific culture in the two countries.

64. For a summary of his argument in comparative perspective, see Allen 2009. See Stephenson 2018 for the critique.

65. See Bottomley 2014 for a discussion of the evolution of the British patent system, its effect on innovation, and the potential link to the Industrial Revolution. See also Sullivan 1989.

66. This series was compiled by Jan Luiten van Zanden and Arthur van Riel (2004) based on underlying data from Doorman 1940.

67. I have compiled this based on underlying data reported in Woodcroft 1854.

68. See Woodcroft 1854, 1.

69. See van Bavel 2016.

70. It is also worth noting that in more modern countries, autocracies have, in fact, engaged in more episodes of land reform than have democracies.

71. This process has been studied extensively by Daniel Bogart (2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and Julian Hoppit (1996).

72. See Rosenthal 1990.

73. See Gentles 1992.

74. Wage data as reported by Robert Allen (2005). Allen's measures have recently been criticized by Stephenson (2018). To the extent her lower estimates are more accurate, the forty-shilling threshold would have been even more onerous for laborers.

75. "Electors of Knights of the Shire Must Be Forty Shilling Freeholders" in Adams 1914, 191.

76. See Payling 1999 on this subject.

77. See Payling 1999, 245. The population estimate is based on that for Nottinghamshire in 1377 from Broadberry et al. 2018. A total population of 52,250, adjusted for one-third of the population being underage and one-half being female, would result in an overall potential male adult electorate of 17,414. The actual number of votes cast was about 3.6 percent of that. Note, this is an estimate based on votes cast, not eligibility.

78. Hill 1972. It is not clear how accurate Hill's assessment about economic depression is given the evidence on rising wages in England at this time. See the data in Allen 2005.

79. See Hill 1972, ch. 7. As he describes, the Levellers were quite a heterogeneous group, so one could even divide them into further units.

80. *An Agreement of the Free People of England*, May 1, 1649, John Lilburne, William Walwyn, Thomas Prince, Richard Overton, published by Gyles Calvert, London. Available at http://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/leveller-anthology-agreements.

81. See Pole 1969 for this interpretation.

82. See Gentles 1992, ch. 10.

83. See the full text at http://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/1647-the-putney-debates.

Chapter 10

1. See the discussion in Huntington 1966.
2. Huntington 1966, 381.
3. Bailyn 1967, 162. See also Kammen 1969 and Bailyn 1965, 60–61.
4. See Zuckerman 1968.
5. See Pole 1969, 32–33. Jack Greene and Yunlong Man have made similar claims. See Greene 2011, 9 and Man 1994. One might question Pole's argument here given that other joint stock companies, such as the Dutch East India Company, employed coercive force of their own.
6. De Tocqueville 1838, vol. 1, ch. 2.
7. Zuckerman 1968, 527.
8. Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641, paragraph 66, https://history.hanover.edu/texts/masslib.html.
9. Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641, paragraph 67.
10. In this sermon Cotton suggested that elections to the General Court should not be so frequent as once a year. He also called for the reelection of John Winthrop. The deputies instead elected someone else. Silva (1999) suggests that Cotton's sermon was the beginning of an election sermon tradition through which Puritan ministers would try to guide and resist the democratizing process. Increase Mather's election sermon of 1693 was another prime example of this trend.
11. See Steinfeld 1989.
12. See Squire 2012, 15–16.
13. See Brown 1955, 50. For a broader but earlier view of the suffrage in the thirteen British North American colonies, see McKinley 1905. For the revolutionary period and after, see Dinkin 1982 and Keyssar 2000.
14. Rabushka 2008, 165–66.
15. See his biographical entries in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1558–1603* as well as *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, History of Parliament Trust, https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/.
16. *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, the Court Book, from the manuscript in the Library of Congress, ed. Susan Myra Kingsbury (Washington, DC: GPO, 1906), 1:411–12.
17. See Kupperman 1979, 34–35.
18. See Morgan 1975, 94.
19. See *Records of the Virginia Company*, 3:483. We should note that the document in which the company laid out this assembly plan dates from July 24, 1621, whereas the first assembly occurred some two years earlier. The general presumption is that the time lag is explained by earlier correspondence between company officials in London and the governor in Virginia. There is commonly thought to be a lost document, dated November 28, 1618, that first laid out the idea for an assembly. See Perry and Cooper 1959, 52.
20. *Colonial Records of Virginia* (Richmond: R. F. Walker, 1874), 9–37.
21. See Rabushka 2008, 236, 240. We should note here that this includes internal taxes for local government. The English Crown also levied taxes on imports of tobacco, and these provided an important source of royal revenue.
22. See Flippin 1915.
23. See Jordan 1987, 1.
24. See Jordan 1987, 233.
25. Squire 2012, 13 suggests that the first assembly took place in 1637–38 with the date depending on the calendar used. Kammen (1969) concurs with this assessment. Jordan (1987, 19)

refers to 1634/35 as the first assembly.

26. As cited in Jordan 1987, 236.

27. Allen's conclusions about the level, but not the seventeenth-century trend, in English wages have recently been challenged by Stephenson (2018).

28. See Gemery 1980, 216.

29. See Congleton 2012; Nikolova 2017; and Nikolova and Nikolova 2017.

30. See Nikolova 2017 for the econometric evidence.

31. This is based on the data in Brown and Brown 1964, 146. It is the average voting rate in elections between 1748 and 1769.

32. See Morgan 1975.

33. See Domar 1970.

34. See Acemoglu and Wolitzky 2011.

35. See Bailyn 2012, 167.

36. See Coldham 1975, 283 for the example and McColley 1986 on the evolution of the use of the terms "servant" and "slave" in the Virginian context.

37. Bailyn 2012, 174–75.

38. See Bailyn 2012, 175 as well as Vaughan and Vaughan 1997.

39. Bailyn 2012, 176.

40. See the foundational studies by Menard (1977, 1980). See also Herndon 1957.

41. *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (1604).

42. My account of Georgia here derives from the work of Gray and Wood (1976).

43. See Allen, Murphy, and Schneider 2012, particularly page 878.

44. This factor has been emphasized by Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2002).

45. This is the estimate provided by Milner and Chaplin (2010). See Snow 1995 for an estimate at the low end of this range and Thornton 2000 for a complete history of estimates of the native North American population.

46. D'Altroy 2015b.

47. See Smith 2012, 61–64.

48. See Rowe 1957. See Dell 2010 for econometric evidence on the persistent effects of the *mita* system.

49. I am relying primarily here on Eccles 1971 and Pritchard 2004.

50. Pritchard (2004, 243), with reference to local colonial conditions, writes of the "negotiated and constructed authority." In agreement with Eccles (1971), he notes that local governors found themselves obliged to have prominent local citizens enter into councils (2004, 247).

51. On the background to the Articles of Confederation, see Greene 1982 and Rakove 2000, 1982.

52. See Manin 1997, 44–45 on Polybius, his interpretation of the Roman constitution, and the subsequent influence of his work on the Republican tradition in Europe.

53. Beard 1913.

54. See Klarman 2016, 85–87, whose book title, *The Framers' Coup*, gives a good sense of the direction of his argument. See Miller 1991 for a historical account that takes a more activist perspective.

55. See the insightful studies by Jason Maloy (2008, 2011). He also emphasizes the practices of audit and impeachment as further forms of non-electoral control of representatives.

56. Varlet 1792, 6.

57. These data are drawn from Squire 2012, 84.

58. These statements can be found in Farrand 1976, vol. 1, Tuesday, June 12th, Committee of the Whole, based on the notes that Madison himself took for that sitting.

59. Farrand 1976, vol. 1, Tuesday, June 12th. Madison expanded further upon this idea in Federalist 53.

60. This quote comes from Taylor 1794, 14. Though we might laud Taylor's perceptiveness, we should also take care to recognize whom he was criticizing and whom he was defending here. The 5,000 for Taylor was the narrow set of people, located primarily in cities like New York, who stood to gain from Alexander Hamilton's system of paper money and public credit. In making this claim, Taylor was taking a page straight from the book written by Tory critics of the "monied interest" in Great Britain and the corruption and influence that this entailed. Taylor was not referring to the nation's 5,000 wealthiest slaveholders, who at this time would have also formed a very wealthy and influential group. Taylor was a supporter of slavery.

61. See Sheehan 2009, 2004.

62. Sheehan 2009.

63. Madison (1791) 1962, December 19, 1791. Emphasis in original.

64. See John 1995.

65. These were compiled by William Dill in 1928 for a thesis at the University of Kansas. See Dill 1928.

66. See Bonnet 1802, 272.

67. Benjamin Franklin, "On the Abuse of the Press," 1788, http://franklinpapers.org/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=45&page=447.

68. Klarman 2016, 404.

69. It has also been argued that a fiercely partisan newspaper could help constituents rally around a common strategy; Stewart 1969.

70. The term "unsteady march" comes from the book of the same name by Philip Klinkner and Rogers Smith (1999). Johnson (2010) provides an extensive and insightful account of the long struggle for the abolition of voting restrictions that disenfranchised African Americans.

Chapter 11

1. This is the approach adopted by Przeworski et al. (2000).
2. http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html.
3. See Huntington 1991.
4. For an extensive and insightful recent treatment of this first wave, see Berman 2019. She also carries through this story to the reemergence of democracy in Europe during the second wave.
5. See Huntington 1991a, 1991b.
6. See Congleton 2001.
7. The phrase comes from the title of Jonathan Israel's 2017 book. See also the earlier, extremely influential, work by Palmer (1959).
8. All GDP per capita figures in this paragraph are expressed in terms of 2011 International (Geary-Khamis) dollars. The source is Bolt et al. 2018.
9. The countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. I am using the democracy measure from Boix, Miller, and Rosato 2013 based on the date at which a country democratized in a durable fashion.
10. See Beckett 1986, 163. See also Beckett 1985.
11. See Brewer 1990, 66.
12. See Pulteney 1734 and Turner 1927.
13. This is the provocative title of Nicholas Henshall's 1992 book.
14. See Swann 2003.
15. See Potter and Rosenthal 1997.
16. For the experience in Languedoc, see Beik 1985. See also Collins 1988.
17. See Schwartzberg 2014.
18. See Christin 2014 and Rigaudière 2000.
19. See Rosanvallon 1992.
20. This is documented in Souryi 2003.
21. See Stasavage 2010 for the evidence.
22. See the econometric evidence in Stasavage 2010 on this point.
23. Onorato, Scheve, and Stasavage (2014) show that prior to the railroad it was infeasible for large states to mobilize armies numbering in the millions because there would have been no way to keep them supplied.
24. Stenlås 2001. See also Bendix and Rokkan 1962.
25. Margaret Levi (1997) has previously documented a link between these two phenomena.
26. Data on universal conscription derive from Onorato, Scheve, and Stasavage (2014).
27. This is the estimate from an OLS regression that includes country and time period fixed effects and that restricts the sample to cases where a country has not yet adopted universal and equal male suffrage. The *p*-value for this estimate is 0.002, indicating a high level of statistical significance. Without country or time fixed effects, the point estimate is 34 percent.
28. This estimate follows the same procedure as described in the previous note except universal conscription is now the dependent variable. In addition to being small, the point estimate of four percentage points is not statistically significant.
29. See Onorato, Scheve, and Stasavage 2014 for econometric evidence on the link between railroads and the mass army.
30. See the discussion in Frevert 2004, 20–21.
31. For evidence and a description of these debates, see Klinck 1982.

32. See Ray 1919.

33. See Hicks 2013 for a recent econometric exploration of this question that reaches a different conclusion from that which I reach here. My conclusions are more in line with the arguments and evidence in Teele 2018.

34. See Teele 2018 for the evidence and argument.

35. See Larson 1965.

36. See Scheve and Stasavage 2016, 2012, 2010.

37. Scheve and Stasavage 2016, 2012.

38. See Scheve and Stasavage 2016.

39. See Dasgupta and Ziblatt 2015.

40. See Piketty 2001.

41. See Scheve and Stasavage 2017.

42. See Scheve and Stasavage 2016.

43. See Piketty 2014 and 2001 for the original French evidence.

44. See Fasel 1974, 659 and Gunn 2008. See also Labrocherie 1948.

45. See Vigier 1991, 11.

46. See Fasel 1974, 655–56.

47. See Fasel 1974 on this point.

48. See Gunn 2008 and Labrocherie 1948.

49. See Gunn 2008, 49.

50. See Brennan 2016.

51. See Zheng 2018, particularly 244–45. For similar views, see Strauss 1997. See also Nathan 1983 on assembly governance during this period.

52. See Strauss 2006 on the campaigns surrounding land reform.

53. See Albertus 2015.

54. "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship: In Commemoration of the Twenty-eighth Anniversary of the Communist Party of China, June 30, 1949," in *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1971), 380.

55. Young (2013) provides the most detailed English-language account of the *hukou* system under the PRC and its antecedents. See also Cheng and Selden 1994; Chan and Zhang 1999.

56. See Young 2013, 34.

57. Strauss (2006) makes the point that the PRC state was built atop earlier efforts by the Kuomintang.

58. Yang 2009, 1.

59. See in particular Roberts 2018.

60. See Perry 2015 for a review.

61. See "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship."

62. As quoted in Perry 2015 based on Calhoun 1997.

63. Crummey (1987) emphasizes this for early periods of Russian development.

64. This idea was proposed by Ostrowski (1990, 2002). See Halperin 2000 for a critical view.

65. Bogatyrev 2000, 11.

66. See Poe 2006.

67. See Crummey 1983 and Alef 1967.

68. The name *zemsky sobor* was invented by Konstantin Aksakov in 1850. See Poe 2006, 460–61.

69. See Poe 2006 and Keep 1970.

70. See Crummey 1987, 20 for a concise description. See Shaw 2006 for a more extensive treatment.

71. See Møller 2015 on this point.

72. Crummey 1987.
73. Poe 2006, 455.
74. Davies 2006.
75. Population estimate from McEvedy and Jones 1978.
76. Based on a population estimate from McEvedy and Jones 1978 of 1.75 million in 1700.
77. Platonova 2009.
78. On the extent to which India's formal institutions after 1947 mirrored or departed from British practice, see Brass 1994. One should acknowledge here that Olsson (2009) finds a cross-country correlation between being a democracy today and having a history of British colonization, particularly if it is a lengthy one.
79. See Sen 2005, 12–16.
80. See Richards 1993.
81. To calculate this figure, I referred to the extensive study by Shireen Moosvi (2015) of original Mughal records. She reports total revenue net of collection costs (ch. 8, p. 2). She then suggests that after local landlords claimed their share, the emperors took 24 to 33 percent of the proceeds. Only this fraction should be considered as central state taxes because the remainder went to local landlords who were not part of the state itself (Moosvi 2015, ch. 8, pp. 4–5). Angus Maddison (1971) makes this same point. If we take the midpoint between 24 and 33 percent and then divide it by the GDP figure provided by Moosvi (ch. 18) we arrive at an extraction rate for the central state of 4.7 percent.
82. See Richards 1993, 90.
83. See Roy 2013, ch. 2.
84. As quoted in Dewey 1972.
85. In the remainder of this section, for conciseness I will use "Africa" as a shorthand for the Sub-Saharan portion of the continent.
86. http://africanelections.tripod.com/gh.html.
87. Crawford Young (1994) makes a powerful argument that because Africa was colonized later than other world regions, the power imbalance between conquerors and conquered was particularly large, and this resulted in an even more pernicious effect of colonialism than in other regions.
88. This is based on data from the UN population division, available at population.un.org.
89. Huntington 1991a, 1991b. See Haggard and Kaufman 2016 for a retrospective on the Third Wave that critiques many existing theories.
90. Huntington 1991b, 31.
91. See Bleck and van de Walle 2018, 1–4 for the three examples and further discussion.
92. Based on the 2018 Freedom House report titled "Democracy in Crisis," https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018.
93. Based on a Polity democracy score of > 6 in 2015.
94. Based on Boix, Miller, and Rosato data in 2015.
95. I used Question Q40 from Round Six of the Afrobarometer Survey, released in 2016 (https://www.afrobarometer.org/). This gives a four-point coding where a respondent chooses that their country is (1) not a democracy, (2) a democracy with large problems, (3) a democracy with small problems, (4) a full democracy. There were also options for not responding, saying one did not know, or that one did not understand the question.
96. The pairwise correlations, based on the twenty-two-country sample for which Afrobarometer data were available, were as follows: dichotomous polity democracy measure 0.40, Freedom House measure of freedom on a 0 to 100 scale 0.58, Boix, Miller, and Rosato (2013) dichotomous measure of democracy 0.64.
97. This negative correlation is most apparent with the self-assessment scale of democracy where the pairwise correlation coefficient with log GDP per capita is negative, large (−0.63), and

statistically significant. Log GDP per capita is also negatively correlated with alternative democracy measures produced by outside coders, but in these cases the correlation coefficients are not statistically significant.

98. This has been emphasized by Cheeseman (2015).

99. If we regress the self-assessment index value for 2016 on the log of tax revenues as a share of GDP between 1990 and 1992, we obtain a coefficient of −0.39 with a standard error of 0.12. Inclusion of current levels of literacy, urbanization, presence of oil rents, foreign grants received, or the identity of the country that colonized does not alter this relationship. When including the log of current GDP per capita as a control the coefficient on the self-assessment index is −0.25 with a standard error of 0.14 and a *p*-value of .098, so it is no longer statistically significant at conventional levels. In an alternative specification substituting the polity democracy measure for the self-assessment index, the coefficient on the polity measure remains negative and statistically significant when controlling for log GDP per capita.

100. See Gottlieb 2019 on these questions.

101. See Raffler 2018.

Chapter 12

1. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt (2018) have provided the most thorough investigation of this question.

2. On backsliding, see Lust and Waldner 2015; Norris 2017; and Bermeo 2016, as well as Levitsky and Way 2015.

3. See Dunn 2005, 149.

4. Bartels 2008.

5. See Levin 1992 for a thorough review of the different arguments made and measures proposed.

6. Ackerman 2010, 11.

7. See Skocpol 1997 on what she calls the "Tocqueville Problem" based on the idea that during his tour of America, Alexis de Tocqueville ignored how a participatory form of democracy had, in part, been forged by government investments, such as the subsidization of newspaper distribution.

8. The text is now commonly referred to as "Brutus 1." See Ball 2012, 446.

9. In order to focus more on a similar set of states, I will concentrate here on western European states within the EU. Among Eastern European EU members levels of trust in government are, on average, ten percentage points lower, no doubt reflecting different historical legacies. The sample I consider then includes Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

10. The result here is not dependent on looking at an arbitrary cutoff in population size. If we regress trust in government on the log of a country's population, we obtain a coefficient of −6.1 with a standard error of 2.1 and a *p*-value of 0.012.

11. See Hetherington 1998, 2005. See https://www.people-press.org/2019/04/11/public-trust-in-government-1958-2019/ for the trends for trust in national government. See https://news.gallup.com/poll/243563/americans-trusting-local-state-government.aspx for the trends for state and local government. There is an alternative view that sees a degree of expressed distrust in government as less of a problem and perhaps even a virtue. After all, the Federalist Papers make a strong case for being suspicious of unchecked government authority. Cook, Hardin, and Levi assess different views of distrust of government in their 2005 book. See pp. 161–63 in particular.

12. A point that has previously been made by Hetherington (2005, 10–11) and still holds today.

13. See in particular Levin 2016, 101.

14. See the discussion in Barry 1974. Dahl and Tufte (1972) argued that representative government could work equally well in small and large units.

15. Gentzkow, Shapiro, and Stone 2014. See also Allcott and Gentzkow 2017; Allcott et al. 2019. See Darr, Hitt, and Dunaway 2018 on how the closure of local newspapers contributes to polarization.

16. See the discussion by Jason Maloy (2011) in particular, with further detail provided in Maloy 2008.

17. See Maloy 2011 for the comparative evidence.

18. Neblo, Esterling, and Lazer 2018.

19. See Mansbridge 1980, 2–3.

20. See Cowen 2018.

21. William Howell (2003), a political scientist, has been a primary exponent of this view. See also the previously discussed contribution by Ackerman (2010) as well as Schlesinger (1973) on the "imperial" tradition in the presidency. See Howell and Moe 2016 for a starkly different view.

22. See Hariri 2012 for the article of the same name. He emphasizes a somewhat different theoretical mechanism than the one I emphasize here.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abraham, Barbara A. 2013. "Danegeld—from Danish Tribute to English Land Tax: The Evolution of Danegeld from 991 to 1086." In *Studies in the History of Tax Law*. Vol. 6. Ed. John Tiley. London: Bloomsbury Press.

Abramson, Scott, and Cartes Boix. Forthcoming. "Endogenous Parliaments: The Domestic and International Roots of Long-Term Economic Growth and Executive Constraints in Europe." *International Organization*.

Acemoglu, Daron. 2005. "Politics and Economics in Weak and Strong States." *Journal of Monetary Economics* 52:1199–1226.

————. 2008. "Oligarchic versus Democratic Societies." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 6:1–44.

Acemoglu, Daron, Davide Cantoni, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson. 2011. "The Consequences of Radical Reform: The French Revolution." *American Economic Review* 101:3286–3307.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2002. "Reversal of Fortune: Geography and Institutions in the Making of the Modern World Income Distribution." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117:1231–94.

————. 2005. "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth." *American Economic Review* 95:546–79.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James Robinson, and Pierre Yared. 2008. "Income and Democracy." *American Economic Review* 98:808–42.

Acemoglu, Daron, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo, and James A. Robinson. 2019. "Democracy Does Cause Growth." *Journal of Political Economy* 127:47–100.

Acemoglu, Daron, and James Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail*. New York: Crown Books.

————. 2019. *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty*. New York: Penguin Press.

Acemoglu, Daron, and Alexander Wolitzky. 2011. "The Economics of Labor Coercion." *Econometrica* 79:555–600.

Acharya, Avidit, and Alexander Lee. 2019. "Path Dependence in European Development: Medieval Politics, Conflict, and State Building." *Comparative Political Studies* 52:2171–2206.

Achen, Christopher, and Larry Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ackerman, Bruce. 2010. *The Decline and Fall of the American Republic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Adams, George Burton. 1914. *Select Documents of English Constitutional History*. New York: Macmillan.

Aghion, Philippe, and Jean Tirole. 1997. "Formal and Real Authority in Organizations." *Journal of Political Economy* 105:1–29.

Ahmed, Ali, and David Stasavage. Forthcoming. "Origins of Early Democracy." New York University. *American Political Science Review*.

Ahmed, Faisal. 2019. "The Political Legacy of Islamic Conquest." Working paper, Princeton University.

Airlie, Stuart. 2003. "Talking Heads: Assemblies in Early Medieval Germany." In *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. P. S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, 29–46. Turnhout: Brepols.

Ake, Claude. 1996. *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Al Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad. 2015. "Principles in the Administration of the Islamic State." https://www.meforum.org/5700/islamic-state-master-plan.

Albertus, Michael. 2015. *Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alef, Gustave. 1967. "Reflections on the Boyar Duma in the Reign of Ivan III." *Slavonic and East European Review* 45:76–123.

Allan, Sarah. 2015. *Buried Ideas: Legends of Abdication and Ideal Government in Early Chinese Bamboo-Slip Manuscripts*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

————. 2017. "The Jishi Outburst Flood of 1920 BCE and the Great Flood Legend in Ancient China: Preliminary Reflections." *Journal of Chinese Humanities* 3:23–34.

Allcott, Hunt, and Matthew Gentzkow. 2017. "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31:211–36.

Allcott, Hunt, Luca Braghieri, Sarah Eichmeyer, and Matthew Gentzkow. 2019. "The Welfare Effects of Social Media." Working paper, New York University.

Allen, Robert. 1997. "Agriculture and the Origins of the State in Egypt." *Explorations in Economic History* 34:135–54.

————. 2005. "Real Wages in Europe and Asia: A First Look at the Long-Term Patterns." In *Living Standards in the Past*, ed. Robert Allen, Tommy Bengtsson, and Martin Dribe, 111–30. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

————. 2009. *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2017. "Falling Behind: The Financial Crisis of the Abbasid Caliphate and the Collapse of Civilization in Southern Mesopotamia." New York University Abu Dhabi.

Allen, Robert, Jean-Pascal Bassino, Debin Ma, Christine Moll-Murata, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2011. "Wages, Prices, and Living Standards in China, 1738–1925: In Comparison with Europe, Japan and India." *Economic History Review* 64:8–38.

Allen, Robert, Tommy Murphy, and Eric Schneider. 2012. "The Colonial Origins of the Divergence in the Americas: A Labor Market Approach." *Journal of Economic History* 72:863–94.

Anderson, Perry. 1974. *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. London: Verso.

Andreski, Stanislav. 1968. *Military Organization and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Andrews, Charles McLean. 1921. *A History of England*. London: Allyn and Bacon.

Ang, James. 2015. "What Drives the Historical Formation and Persistent Development of Territorial States?" *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 117:1134–75.

Angelucci, Charles, Simone Meraglia, and Nico Voigtlaender. 2019. "How Merchants Towns Shaped Parliaments: From the Norman Conquest of England to the Great Reform Act." Working paper, University of California–Los Angeles.

Aristotle. 1946. *The Politics of Aristotle—Translated by Ernest Barker*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Asiwaju, A. I. 1976. "Migrations as Revolt: The Example of the Ivory Coast and the Upper Volta before 1945." *Journal of African History* 17:577–94.

Ayittey, George. 1991. *Indigenous African Institutions*. Leiden: Brill.

Bachrach, Bernard S. 2016. “Charlemagne and Carolingian Military Administration.” In *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History: From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Crooks and Timothy H. Parsons, 170–96. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bagnall, Roger. 1995. *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bailkey, Nels. 1967. “Early Mesopotamian Constitutional Development.” *American Historical Review*: 72:1211–36.

Bailyn, Bernard. 1965. *The Origins of American Politics*. New York: Vintage Books.

————. 1967. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

————. 2012. *The Barbarous Years: The Peopling of British North America: The Conflict of Civilizations, 1600–1675*. New York: Vintage.

Bairoch, Paul, Jean Batou, and Pierre Chèvre. 1988. *The Population of European Cities from 800 to 1850*. Geneva: Librairie Droz.

Baker, G., R. Gibbons, and K. J. Murphy. 1999. “Informal Authority in Organizations.” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 15:56–73.

Baldwin, Kate. 2015. *The Paradox of Traditional Chiefs in Democratic Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Baldwin, Kate, and Katharina Holzinger. Forthcoming. “Traditional Political Institutions and Democracy: Reassessing Their Compatibility and Accountability.” *Comparative Political Studies*.

Ball, Terence, ed. 2012. *The Federalist with Letters of “Brutus.”* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barbero, A., and M. I. Loring. 2005. “The Catholic Visigothic Kingdom.” In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*. Vol. 1: *C. 500–C. 700*, ed. Paul Fouracre, 346–70. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barcelo, Miquel. 1984. “Un estudio sobre la estructura fiscal y procedimientos contables del emirato omeya de Cordoba y del Califato.” *Acta Histórica et Archaeologica Medievalia* 5–6:45–72.

Bard, Edouard, Grant Raisbeck, Francoise Yiou, and Jean Jouzel. 2000. “Solar Irradiance during the Last 1200 Years Based on Cosmogenic Nuclides.” *Tellus* 52B:985–92.

Barfield, Thomas. 1993. *The Nomadic Alternative*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barjamovic, Gojko. 2004. “Civic Institutions and Self-Government in Southern Mesopotamia in the Mid-First Millennium BC.” In *Assyria and Beyond: Studies Presented to Mogens Trolle Larsen*. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het nabije oosten.

Barker, Randolph. 2012. “The Origin and Spread of Early-Ripening Champa Rice: Its Impact on Song Dynasty China.” *Rice* 4:184–86.

Barnwell, P. S. 2003a. “Kings, Nobles, and Assemblies in the Barbarian Kingdoms.” In *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. P. S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, 11–28. Turnhout: Brepols.

————. 2003b. “Political Assemblies: Introduction.” In *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. P. S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, 1–10. Turnhout: Brepols.

Barnwell, P. S., and Marco Mostert, eds. 2003. *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*. Turnhout: Brepols.

Barratt, Nick. 1996. “The Revenue of King John.” *English Historical Review* 111:835–55.

————. 1999. “The Revenues of King John and Philip Augustus Revisited.” In *King John: New Interpretations*, ed. S. D. Church. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

————. 2004. “Finance on a Shoestring: The Exchequer in the Thirteenth Century.” In *English Government in the Thirteenth Century*, ed. Adrian Jobson. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Barro, Robert. 1996. “Democracy and Growth.” *Journal of Economic Growth* 1:1–27.
Barry, Brian. 1974. “Size and Democracy—Review of Dahl and Tufte.” *Government and Opposition* 9:492–93.
Bartels, Larry. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Barzel, Yoram. 1997. *Economic Analysis of Property Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
————. 2002. *A Theory of the State: Economic Rights, Legal Rights, and the Scope of the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bass, Allen M. 1995. “Early Germanic Experience and the Origins of Representation.” *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 15:1–11.
Bates, Robert, and Donald Lien. 1985. “A Note on Taxation, Development, and Representative Government.” *Politics and Society* 14:53–70.
Beard, Charles. 1913. *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*. New York: Macmillan.
Beckett, John. 1985. “Land Tax or Excise: The Levying of Taxation in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England.” *English Historical Review* 100:285–308.
————. 1986. “Land Tax Administration at the Local Level, 1692–1798.” In *Land and Property: The English Land Tax: 1692–1832*, ed. Michael Turner and Dennis Mills. New York: St. Martin’s Press.
Bede. 1999. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Beik, William. 1985. *Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Benario, Herbert. 1999. *Tacitus: Germania*. Warminster: Aris and Phillips.
Bendix, Reinhard. 1978. *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Bendix, Reinhard, and Stein Rokkan. 1962. “The Extension of National Citizenship to the Lower Classes.” Paper presented to the Fifth World Congress of Sociology.
Bentzen, Jeanet, Jacob Gerner Hariri, and James Robinson. 2019. “Power and Persistence: The Indigenous Roots of Representative Democracy.” *Economic Journal* 129:678–714.
Berdan, Frances. 2017. “Structure of the Triple Alliance Empire.” In *The Oxford Handbook of the Aztecs*, ed. Deborah Nichols and Enrique Rodriguez-Alegria. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Berdan, Frances, and Patricia Rieff Anawalt. 1992. *The Codex Mendoza*. 4 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Berman, Sheri. 2019. *Democracy and Dictatorship in Europe from the Ancien Régime to the Present Day*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. “On Democratic Backsliding.” *Journal of Democracy* 27:5–19.
Besley, Timothy, and Torsten Persson. 2011. *Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Developmental Clusters*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Bielenstein, Hans. 1980. *The Bureaucracy of Han Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Binford, Lewis R. 2001. *Constructing Frames of Reference: An Analytical Method for Archaeological Theory Building Using Ethnographic and Environmental Data Sets*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Bisson, Thomas. 1964. *Assemblies and Representation in Languedoc in the Thirteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 1973. *Medieval Representative Institutions: Their Origins and Nature*. Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press.

———. 1977. "A General Court of Aragon (Daroca, February 1228)." *English Historical Review* 92:107–24.

———. 1996. "The Origins of the Corts of Catalonia." *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 16:31–45.

———. 2009. *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Blackstone, William. 1768. *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Blair, Peter Hunter. 1959. *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blanton, Richard, and Lane Fargher. 2008. *Collective Action in the Formation of Pre-Modern States*. New York: Springer.

———. 2016. *How Humans Cooperate: Confronting the Challenges of Collective Action*. Boulder: University of Colorado Press.

Blaydes, Lisa. 2017. "State Building in the Middle East." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20:487–504.

Blaydes, Lisa, and Eric Chaney. 2013. "The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian and Muslim World before 1500 CE." *American Political Science Review* 107:16–34.

Bleck, Jaimie, and Nicolas van de Walle. 2018. *Electoral Politics in Africa since 1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bloch, Marc. 1961. *Feudal Society*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 1966. *French Rural History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Blockmans, Wim. 1978. "A Typology of Representative Institutions in Late Medieval Europe." *Journal of Medieval History* 4:189–215.

———. 1998. "Representation (since the Thirteenth Century)." In *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Christopher Allmand. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boas, Franz. 1913. *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl*. Washington, DC: GPO.

Bockheim, James G., and Alfred E. Hartemink. 2017. "Soils and Land Appraisal." In *The Soils of Wisconsin*, 213–22. World Soils Book Series. New York: Springer.

Bodin, Jean. 1576. *Les Six Livres de la République*. Paris: Jacques du Puys.

Bogaard, Amy, Rebecca Fraser, Tim H. E. Heaton, Michael Wallace, Petra Vaiglova, Michael Charles, Glynis Jones, Richard P. Evershed, Amy K. Styring, Niels H. Andersen, Rose-Marie Arbogast, László Bartosiewicz, Armelle Gardeisen, Marie Kanstrup, Ursula Maier, Elena Marinova, Lazar Ninov, Marguerita Schäfer, and Elisabeth Stephan. 2013. "Crop Manuring and Intensive Land Management by Europe's First Farmers." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 110:12589–594.

Bogart, Daniel. 2005a. "Turnpike Trusts and the Transportation Revolution in 18th Century England." *Explorations in Economic History* 42:479–508.

———. 2005b. "Turnpike Trusts, Infrastructure Investment, and the Road Transportation Revolution in Eighteenth-Century England." *Journal of Economic History* 65:540–43.

———. 2005c. "Did Turnpike Trusts Increase Transportation Investment in Eighteenth-Century England?" *Journal of Economic History* 65:439–68.

Bogatyrev, Sergei. 2000. *The Sovereign and His Counsellors: Ritualised Consultations in Muscovite Political Culture, 1350s–1570s*. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

Boix, Carles. 2011. "Democracy, Development, and the International System." *American Political Science Review* 105:809–28.

————. 2015. *Political Order and Inequality: Their Foundations and Their Consequences for Human Welfare*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Boix, Carles, M. Miller, and S. Rosato. 2013. "A Complete Data Set of Political Regimes, 1800–2007." *Comparative Political Studies* 46:1523–54.

Bolt, Jutta, Robert Inklaar, Herman de Jong, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2018. "Rebasing 'Maddison': New Income Comparisons and the Shape of Long-Run Economic Development." Working paper, Utrecht University.

Bolt, Jutta, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2014. "The Maddison Project: Collaborative Research on Historical National Accounts." *Economic History Review* 67:627–51.

Bonis, Gyorgy. 1965. "The Hungarian Feudal Diet." In *Gouvernés et Gouvernants: Quatrième Partie, Bas Moyen Age et Temps Modernes*, ed. John Gilissen. Bruxelles: Editions de la Librairie Encyclopédique.

Bonnet, Jean-Esprit. 1802. *Etats-Unis de L'Amérique à la fin du xviiième siècle*. Paris: Maradan.

Borcan, Oana, Ola Olsson, and Louis Putterman. 2018. "State History and Economic Development: Evidence from Six Millennia." *Journal of Economic Growth* 23:1–40.

Boserup, Ester. 1965. *The Conditions of Agricultural Growth: The Economics of Agrarian Change under Population Pressure*. Chicago: Aldine.

Bosker, Maarten, Eltjo Buringh, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2013. "From Baghdad to London: Unraveling Urban Development in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, 800–1800." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 95:1418–37.

Bottomley, Sean. 2014. *The British Patent System during the Industrial Revolution 1700–1852: From Privilege to Property*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boucoyannis, Deborah. 2015a. "Strong Rulers, Land and Courts: The Origins of Representative Institutions." Unpublished book manuscript, University of Virginia.

————. 2015b. "No Taxation of Elites, No Representation: State Capacity and the Origins of Representation." *Politics & Society* 43:303–32.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean-Claude Passeron. 1969. *Les héritiers, les étudiants et la culture*. Paris: Edition du Minuit.

Boyd, Clifford, and Gerald Schroedl. 1987. "In Search of Coosa." *American Antiquity* 52:840–44.

Brand, Paul. 2009. "The Development of Parliament, 1215–1307." In *A Short History of Parliament*, ed. Clyve Jones. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Brass, Paul. 1994. "Introduction: Continuities and Discontinuities between Pre- and Post-Independence India." In *The Politics of India since Independence*, ed. Paul R. Brass. New Cambridge History of India. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bratton, Michael, and Nicolas Van De Walle. 1997. *Democratic Experiments in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bray, Francesca. 1979. "Agricultural Technology and Agrarian Change in Han China." *Early China* 5:3–13.

Brennan, Jason. 2016. *Against Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Brett, Michael. 2010. "Egypt." In *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brevik, Eric C., and Alfred E. Hartemink. 2010. “Early Soil Knowledge and the Birth and Development of Soil Science.” *Catena* 83:23–33.
Brewer, John. 1990. *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688–1789*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Broadberry, Stephen, Bruce Campbell, Alexander Klein, Mark Overton, and Bas van Leeuwen. 2011. “British Economic Growth, 1270–1870: An Output-Based Approach.” Working paper, Oxford University.
Broadberry, Stephen, Bruce Campbell, and Bas van Leeuwen. 2010. “English Medieval Population: Reconciling the Time Series and Cross-Sectional Evidence.” Working paper, Oxford University.
Broadberry, Stephen, Hanhui Guan, and David Daokui Li. 2018. “China, Europe, and the Great Divergence: A Study in Historical National Accounting, 980–1850.” *Journal of Economic History* 78:955–1000.
Broecker, Wallace S. 2001. “Was the Medieval Warm Period Global?” *Science* 291:1497.
Brook, Timothy. 1998. “Communications and Commerce.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty*, ed. Denis C. Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote, 579–707. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
————. 2010. *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brookes, Stuart, and Andrew Reynolds. 2011. “The Origins of Political Order and the Anglo-Saxon State.” *Archaeology International* 13/14:84–93.
Browers, Michaelle. 2006. *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
Brown, Robert. 1955. *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691–1780*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Brown, Robert, and Katherine Brown. 1964. *Virginia, 1705–1786: Democracy or Aristocracy?* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
Brownlee, Jason. 2012. *Democracy Prevention: The Politics of the U.S.-Egyptian Alliance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bryan, Frank. 2004. *Real Democracy: The New England Town Meeting and How It Works*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Buck, John Lossing. 1937. *Land Utilization in China, a Study of 16,786 Farms in 168 Localities, and 38,256 Farm Families in Twenty-Two Provinces in China, 1929–1933*. Shanghai: Commercial Press.
Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Ethan Bueno de Mesquita. 2018. “From Investiture to Worms: A Political Economy of European Development and the Rise of Secular Authority.” Working paper, New York University.
Burt, Caroline. 2013. *Edward I and the Governance of England, 1272–1307*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bush, M. L. 1983. “The Act of Proclamations: A Reinterpretation.” *American Journal of Legal History* 27:33–53.
Calhoun, Craig. 1997. *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Cammett, Melani. 2018. “Development and Underdevelopment in the Middle East and North Africa.” In *Oxford Handbook of the Politics of Development*, ed. Carol Lancaster and Nicolas van de Walle. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Campbell, Bruce. 2007. “Three Centuries of English Crop Yields, 1211–1491.” http://www.cropyields.ac.uk/.

————. 2016. *The Great Transition: Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Campbell, James. 1975. "Observations on English Government from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25:39–54.
————. 1991. "The Late Anglo-Saxon State: A Maximum View." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 87:39–65.
Campopiano, Michele. 2012. "State, Land Tax and Agriculture in Iraq from the Arab Conquest to the Crisis of the Abbasid Caliphate (Seventh–Tenth Centuries)." *Studia Islamica* 3:5–50.
Cao, Shuji. 1997. *The Migrant History of China*. Vol. 5: *The Ming Dynasty Period*. Fuzhou: Fujian People's Press.
Carniello, B. R. 2002. "The Rise of an Administrative Elite in Medieval Bologna: Notaries and Popular Government, 1282–1292." *Journal of Medieval History* 28:319–47.
Carniero, Robert. 1970. "A Theory of the Origin of the State." *Science* 169:733–38.
Carpenter, Rhys. 1957. "Linear B." *Phoenix* 11:47–62.
Carrasco, Pedro. 1971. "Social Organization of Ancient Mexico." In *Handbook of Middle American Indians: Volume 10*, ed. Gordon Ekholm and Ignacio Bernal, 349–75. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Carsten, F. L. 1954. *The Origins of Prussia*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
————. 1959. *Princes and Parliaments in Germany: From the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Carter, Thomas Francis. 1955. *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward*. New York: Ronald Press Company.
Catt, J. A. 2001. "The Agricultural Importance of Loess." *Earth Science Reviews* 54:213–29.
Chan, Kam Wing, and Li Zhang. 1999. "The Hukou System and Rural-Urban Migration in China: Processes and Changes." *China Quarterly* 160:818–55.
Chaney, Eric. 2012. "Democratic Change in the Arab World, Past and Present." *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 43:363–414.
————. 2016. "Religion and the Rise and Fall of Islamic Science." Working paper, Harvard University.
Chang, Kwang-Chih. 1980. *Shang Civilization*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
————. 1999. "China on the Eve of the Historical Period." In *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward Shaughnessy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cheeseman, Nic. 2015. *Democracy in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Chen, Joy, Jason Guo, and Avner Greif. 2018. "Elite Reproduction and State Capacity Deterioration in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) of China." Working paper, New York University.
Chen, Ting, James Kai-sing Kung, and Chicheng Ma. 2019. "Long Live Keju! The Persistent Effects of China's Civil Examination System." Working paper, University of Hong Kong.
Cheng, Tiejun, and Mark Selden. 1994. "The Origins and Social Consequences of China's Hukou System." *China Quarterly* 139:644–68.
Childe, Gordon. 1950. "The Urban Revolution." *Town Planning Review* 21:3–17.
Christin, Olivier. 2014. *Vox Populi*. Paris: Seuil.
Civil, Miguel. 1991. "Ur III Bureaucracy: Quantitative Aspects." In *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. McGuire Gibson and Robert Gibbs, 35–44. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Clamageran, J. J. 1867. *Histoire de l'impôt en France*. Paris: Librairie de Guillaumin.

Clark, Christopher. 2006. *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600–1947*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Clark, Gregory. 1996. "The Political Foundations of Modern Economic Growth: England, 1540–1800." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 26:563–88.
Clastres, Pierre. 1974. *La société contre l'état*. Paris: Editions de Minuit.
Cline, Eric H. 2014. *1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Cobb, Charles R. 2003. "Mississippian Chiefdoms: How Complex?" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32:63–84.
Cobo, Bernabé. 1979. *History of the Inca Empire*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Colden, Cadwallader. (1727) 1958. *The History of the Five Indian Nations: Depending on the Province of New-York in America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Coldham, Peter Wilson. 1975. "The 'Spiriting' of London Children to Virginia: 1648–1685." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 83:280–87.
Colless, Brian. 2014. "The Origin of the Alphabet: An Examination of the Goldwasser Hypothesis." *Antigua Orienta* 12:71–104.
Collins, James B. 1988. *Fiscal Limits of Absolutism: Direct Taxation in Early Seventeenth-Century France*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Congar, Yves. 1958. "Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet." *Revue historique de droit francais et etranger* 36:210–59.
Congleton, Roger D. 2001. "On the Durability of King and Council: The Continuum between Dictatorship and Democracy." *Constitutional Political Economy* 12:193–215.
————. 2011. *Perfecting Parliament: Constitutional Reform, Liberalism, and the Rise of Western Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
————. 2012. "Democracy in America: Labor Mobility, Early Liberalism, and Constitutional Reform." Working paper, West Virginia University.
Cook, Karen, Russell Hardin, and Margaret Levi. 2005. *Cooperation without Trust*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
Covey, R. Alan. 2008. "The Inka Empire." In *Handbook of South American Archaeology*, ed. Helaine Silverman and William Isbell. New York: Springer.
Cowen, Tyler. 2018. "Could Fascism Come to America?" In *Can It Happen Here?: Authoritarianism in America*, ed. Cass Sunstein. New York: Harper Collins.
Cowgill, George. 2015. *Ancient Teotihuacan: Early Urbanism in Central Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Cox, Gary. 2016. *Marketing Sovereign Promises: Monopoly Brokerage and the Growth of the English State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
————. 2017. "Political Institutions, Economic Liberty, and the Great Divergence." *Journal of Economic History* 77:724–55.
Crabtree, Pam J. 2018. *Early Medieval Britain: The Rebirth of Towns in the Post-Roman West*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Crone, Patricia. 1999. "The Early Islamic World." In *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, ed. Kurt Raaflaub and Nathan Rosenstein. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
————. 2000. "Ninth-Century Muslim Anarchists." *Past and Present* 167:3–28.
————. 2001. "Shura as an Elective Institution." *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 19:3–39.
Crone, Patricia, and Martin Hinds. 2003. *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Crosby, Alfred. 1972. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Cross, Frank Moore. 1989. “The Invention and Development of the Alphabet.” In *The Origins of Writing*, ed. Wayne Senner. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Crummey, Robert. 1983. *Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613–1689*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 1987. *The Formation of Muscovy*. London: Longman.

Cunliffe, Barry. 2011. *Europe between the Oceans, 9000 BC–1000 AD*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Curta, Florin. 2006. “Merovingian and Carolingian Gift Giving.” *Speculum* 81:671–99.

d’Altroy, Terence. 2015a. *The Incas*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

————. 2015b. “The Inka Empire.” In *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States*, ed. Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dahl, Robert. 1998. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dahl, Robert, and Edward Tufte. 1972. *Size and Democracy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Dalan, Rinita, George Holley, William Woods, Harold Watters, and John Koepke. 2003. *Envisioning Cahokia: A Landscape Perspective*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Damen, Mario, Jelle Haemers, and Alastair Mann. 2018. *Political Representation: Communities, Ideas, and Institutions in Europe (c. 1200–c. 1690)*. Leiden: Brill.

Daniels, Peter, and William Bright. 1996. *The World’s Writing Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Darling, Linda. 2012. *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East*. New York: Routledge.

Darr, Joshua, Matthew Hitt, and Johanna Dunaway. 2018. “Newspaper Closures Polarize Voting Behavior.” *Journal of Communication* 68:1007–1028.

Dasgupta, Aditya, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2015. “How Did Britain Democratize? Views from the Sovereign Bond Market.” *Journal of Economic History* 75:1–29.

Davies, Brian. 2006. “Local Government and Administration.” In *The Cambridge History of Russia*. Vol. 1: *From Early Rus’ to 1689*, ed. Maureen Perrie. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davis, Jennifer. 2015. *Charlemagne’s Practice of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2017. “Inventing the Missi: Delegating Power in the Late Eighth and Early Ninth Centuries.” In *The ‘Abbasid and Carolingian Empires*, ed. D. G. Tor, 11–51. Leiden: Brill.

de Lagarde, Georges. 1939. “La structure politique et sociale de l’Europe au XIVème siècle.” In *L’organisation corporative du moyen age à la fin de l’ancien régime*, 91–118. Louvain: Bibliothèque de l’Université.

de Meis, S., and J. Meeus. 1994. “Quintuple Planetary Groupings: Rarity, Historical Events and Popular Beliefs.” *Journal of the British Astronomical Association* 104:293–97.

de Pleijt, Alexandra, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2016. “Accounting for the ‘Little Divergence’: What Drove Economic Growth in Pre-Industrial Europe, 1300–1800?” *European Review of Economic History* 20:387–409.

de Swarte, Victor. 1885. “Essai sur l’histoire de la comptabilité publique en France.” *Bulletin de la Société de statistique de Paris* 26:317–52.

de Tocqueville, Alexis. 1838. *Democracy in America*. New York: Adlard & Saunders.

de Vries, Jan, and A. B. van der Woude. 1997. *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Decoster, Caroline. 2002. “La convocation à l’assemblée de 1302, instrument juridique au service de la propagande royale.” *Parliaments, Estates, and Representation* 22:17–36.

————. 2008. “Les assemblées politiques sous le règne de Philippe IV le Bel.” PhD diss., Université de Paris II.

Dell, Melissa. 2010. “The Persistent Effects of Peru’s Mining *Mita*.” *Econometrica* 78:1863–1903.

DeLong, J. Bradford, and Andrei Shleifer. 1993. “Princes and Merchants: European City Growth before the Industrial Revolution.” *Journal of Law and Economics* 36:671–702.

Deng, Kent. 2003. “Development and Its Deadlock in Imperial China, 221 B.C.–1840 A.D.” *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 51:479–522.

————. 2015. “Imperial China under the Song and Late Qing.” In *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States*, ed. Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel, 308–42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deng, Kent, and Patrick O’Brien. 2016. “China’s GDP Per Capita from the Han Dynasty to Communist Times.” London School of Economics.

Deng, Kent, and Lucy Zheng. 2015. “Economic Restructuring and Demographic Growth: Demystifying Growth and Development in Northern Song China, 960–1127.” *Economic History Review* 68:1107–31.

Detienne, Marcel. 2003. *Qui veut prendre la parole*? Paris: Seuil.

Devroey, Jean-Pierre. 2012. “L’introduction de la dîme obligatoire en Occident: Entre espaces ecclésiaux et territoires seigneuriaux à l’époque Carolingienne.” In *La dîme l’église et la société féodale*, ed. Michel Lauwers. Turnhout: Brepols.

Dewey, Clive. 1972. “Images of the Village Community: A Study in Anglo-Indian Ideology.” *Modern Asian Studies* 6:291–328.

Diamond, Jared. 1997. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Diamond, Larry. 2010. “Why Are There No Arab Democracies?” *Journal of Democracy* 21:93–112.

Dill, William. 1928. “Growth of Newspapers in the United States.” M.A. thesis, University of Kansas.

Dincecco, Mark. 2011. *Political Transformations and Public Finances: Europe, 1650–1913*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dincecco, Mark, and Yuhua Wang. 2018. “Violent Conflict and Political Development over the Long Run: China versus Europe.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 21:341–58.

Dinkin, Robert. 1982. *Voting in Revolutionary America: A Study of Elections in the Original Thirteen States, 1776–1789*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Divale, W. 1974. “Migration, External Warfare, and Matrilocal Residence.” *Cross Cultural Research* 9:75–133.

————. 1984. *Matrilocal Residence in Pre-Literate Society*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.

Domar, Evsey D. 1970. “The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom: A Hypothesis.” *Journal of Economic History* 30:18–32.

Doorman, G. 1940. *Octrooien voor uitvindingen in de Nederlanden uit de 16e–18e eeuw*. ’s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff.

Downing, Brian. 1992. *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Duby, Georges. 1972. “Medieval Agriculture, 900–1500.” In *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, ed. Carlo Cipolla. Glasgow: Collins.

Dunn, John. 2005. *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dupâquier, Jacques. 1988. *Histoire de la Population Française*. Paris: PUF.
Durand, Jean-Marie. 2003. " 'Se réunir' en Syrie: Au temps du Royaume de Mari." In *Qui veut prendre la parole?* ed. Marcel Detienne. Paris: Seuil.
Durand, John. 1977. "Historical Estimates of World Population: An Evaluation." *Population and Development Review* 3:253–296.
Easterly, William, and Stanley Fischer. 1995. "The Soviet Economic Decline." *World Bank Economic Review* 9:341–71.
Eccles, W. J. 1971. *The Government of New France*. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association.
Edwards, J. G. 1934. "The Plena Potestas of English Parliamentary Representatives." *Oxford Essays in Medieval History Presented to H. E. Salter*, ed. F. M. Powicke. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Elton, G. R. 1953. *The Tudor Revolution in Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
————. 1955. *England under the Tudors*. London: Methuen.
————. 1960. *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Elvin, Mark. 1973. *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
————. 2004. *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Ember, Carolyn. 1975. "Residential Variation among Hunter-Gatherers." *Behavioral Science Research* 10:199–227.
Ember, Carolyn, Bruce Russett, and Milton Ember. 1993. "Political Participation and Peace: Cross-Cultural Codes." *Ethnology* 27:97–145.
Engels, Friedrich. (1884) 2010. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. New York: Penguin Classics.
Epstein, Stephan R. 2000a. "The Rise and Fall of Italian City-States." In *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures: An Investigation Conducted by the Copenhagen Polis Centre*, ed. M. H. Hansen. Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab.
————. 2000b. *Freedom and Growth: The Rise of States and Markets in Europe, 1300–1750*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Erickson, Clark. 2006. "Intensification, Political Economy, and the Farming Community; in Defense of a Bottom-up Perspective of the Past." Working paper, University of Pennsylvania.
Ertman, Thomas. 1997. *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Evans, Geoffrey. 1958. "Ancient Mesopotamian Assemblies." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 78:1–11.
Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1971. *The Azande: History and Political Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Fargher, Lane F., Richard E. Blanton, and Verenice Y. Heredia Espinoza. 2010. "Egalitarian Ideology and Political Power in Prehispanic Central Mexico: The Case of Tlaxcallan." *Latin American Antiquity* 21:227–51.
————. 2017a. "The Independent Republic of Tlaxcallan." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Aztecs*, ed. Deborah Nichols and Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
————. 2017b. "Aztec State-Making, Politics, and Empires." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Aztecs*, ed. Deborah Nichols and Enrique Rodríguez-Alegría. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fargher, Lane F., Verenice Y. Heredia Espinoza, and Richard E. Blanton. 2011. “Alternative Pathways to Power in Late Postclassic Highland Mesoamerica.” *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 30:306–26.

Farmer, Edward L. 1995. *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*. Leiden: Brill.

Farrand, Max. 1976. *Records of the Federal Convention*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Fasel, George. 1974. “The Wrong Revolution: French Republicanism in 1848.” *French Historical Studies* 8:654–77.

Feinman, Gary M., and David M. Carballo. 2018. “Collaborative and Competitive Strategies in the Variability and Resiliency of Large-Scale Societies in Mesoamerica.” *Economic Anthropology* 5:7–19.

Feng, Li. 2003. “ ‘Feudalism’ and Western Zhou China: A Criticism.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 63:115–44.

————. 2008. *Bureaucracy and the State in Early China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2013. *Early China: A Social and Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferejohn, John, and Frances Rosenbluth. 2017. *Forged through Fire: War, Peace, and the Democratic Bargain*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Finer, Samuel. 1995. *The History of Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Flannery, Kent, and Joyce Marcus. 2012. *The Creation of Inequality: How Our Prehistoric Ancestors Set the Stage for Monarchy, Slavery, and Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fleming, Daniel. 2004. *Democracy’s Ancient Ancestors: Mari and Early Collective Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fletcher, Christopher. 2015. “Political Representation.” In *Government and Political Life in England and France, c. 1300–c. 1500*, ed. Christopher Fletcher, Jean-Phillippe Genet, and John Watts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fletcher, Joseph. 1986. “The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46:11–50.

Flippin, Percy Scott. 1915. *The Financial Administration of the Colony of Virginia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Fochesato, Mattia, and Sam Bowles. 2017. “Technology, Institutions, and Wealth Inequality over Eleven Millennia.” Working paper, Santa Fe Institute.

Fortes, M., and E. E. Evans-Pritchard. (1940) 2016. *African Political Systems*. Victoria, Australia: Leopold Classic Library.

Freeman, Joanne. 2001. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Frevert, Uwe. 2004. *A Nation in Barracks: Conscription, Military Service and Civil Society in Modern Germany*. New York: Berg.

Friberg, Joran. 2009. “A Geometric Algorithm with Solutions to Quadratic Equations in a Sumerian Juridical Document from Ur III Umma.” *Cuneiform Digital Library Journal* 3:1–27.

Fukuyama, Francis. 2011. *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Gabrielsen, Vincent. 1997. *The Naval Aristocracy of Hellenistic Rhodes*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.

Galbraith, V. H. 1948. *Studies in the Public Records*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons.

Galor, Oded, and Ömer Özak. 2015. “Land Productivity and Economic Development: Caloric Suitability vs. Agricultural Suitability.” Working paper, Brown University.

————. 2016. “The Agricultural Origins of Time Preference.” *American Economic Review* 106:3064–3103.

Ganshof, Francois-Louis. 1968. *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*. Providence: Brown University Press.

Garland, R. 1987. *The Piraeus from the Fifth to the First Century B.C.* London: Duckworth.

Gemery, Henry. 1980. “Emigration from the British Isles to the New World, 1630–1700: Inferences from Colonial Populations.” *Research in Economic History* 5:179–231.

Gendron. 1660. *Quelque particularitez du pays des Hurons en la Nouvelle France*. Paris: Louis Billaine.

Gentleman of Elvas. 1993. “The Account by a Gentleman from Elvas.” In *The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539–1543*, ed. L. A. Clayton, V. J. Knight, and E. C. Moore. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Gentles, Ian. 1992. *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645–1653*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Gentzkow, Matthew, Jesse Shapiro, and Daniel Stone. 2014. “Media Bias in the Marketplace: Theory.” National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 19880.

Gibson, Charles. 1952. *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

————. 1971. “Structure of the Aztec Empire.” In *Handbook of Middle American Indians: Volume 10*, ed. Gordon Ekholm and Ignacio Bernal, 376–94. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Gilissen, John. 1966. “Les etats généraux en Belgique et aux Pays-Bas sous l’ancien régime.” In *Gouvernés et Gouvernants: Troisième partie, bas moyen age et temps modernes*, ed. John Gilissen. Bruxelles: Editions de la Librairie Encyclopédique.

Giuliano, Paola, and Nathan Nunn. 2013. “The Transmission of Democracy: From the Village to the Nation-State.” *American Economic Review* 103:86–92.

Given-Wilson, C. 2016. “Bureaucracy without Alphabetic Writing: Governing the Inca Empire, c. 1438–1532.” In *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History: From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, ed. P. Crooks and T. Parsons, 81–101. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Glick, Thomas. 1982. In *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. Ed. Joseph Strayer. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons.

Goffart, Walter. 1972. “From Roman Taxation to Medieval Seigneurie.” *Speculum* 47:373–34.

————. 1982. “Old and New in Merovingian Taxation.” *Past and Present* 96:3–21.

————. 2006. *Barbarian Tides: The Migration Age and the Later Roman Empire*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

————. 2008. “Frankish Military Duty and the Fate of Roman Taxation.” *Early Medieval Europe* 16:166–90.

Golas, Peter. 1980. “Rural China in the Song.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 39:291–325.

————. 2015. “The Sung Fiscal Administration.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 5, part 2: *Sung China, 960–1279*, ed. John Chaffee and Denis Twitchett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goldberg, Eric. 1995. “Popular Revolt, Dynastic Politics, and Aristocratic Factionalism in the Early Middle Ages: The Saxon Stellinga Reconsidered.” *Speculum* 70:467–501.

Goldstone, Jack A. 2002. “Efflorescences and Economic Growth in World History: Rethinking the ‘Rise of the West’ and the Industrial Revolution.” *Journal of World History* 13:323–89.

————. 2006. “Europe’s Peculiar Path.” In *Unmaking the West: “What-If” Scenarios That Rewrite World History*, ed. Philip E. Tetlock, Richard Ned Lebow, and Geoffrey Parker, 168–96. Ann

Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

————. 2009. *Why Europe? The Rise of the West in World History, 1500–1850*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Gong, Zitong, Putian Lin, Jie Chen, and Xuefeng Hu. 2001. "Classical Farming Systems of China." *Journal of Crop Production* 3:11–21.

Gong, Zitong, Xuelei Zhang, Jie Chen, and Ganlin Zhang. 2003. "Origin and Development of Soil Science in Ancient China." *Geoderma* 115:3–13.

Goody, Jack. 1986. *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2006. *The Theft of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gottlieb, Jessica. 2019. "Keeping the State Weak to Prevent Collective Claim-Making in Young Democracies." Working paper, Texas A&M University.

Grab, Alexander. 2003. *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gramly, Richard Michael. 1977. "Deerskins and Hunting Territories: Competition for a Scarce Resource of the Northeastern Woodlands." *American Antiquity* 42:601–5.

Gray, Ralph, and Betty Wood. 1976. "The Transition from Indentured to Involuntary Servitude in Colonial Virginia." *Explorations in Economic History* 13:353–70.

Green, J. A. 1981. "The Last Century of Danegeld." *English Historical Review* 96:241–58.

Greene, Jack. 1982. "The Background of the Articles of Confederation." *Publius* 12:15–44.

————. 2011. *The Constitutional Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greer Smith, Maurice. 1925. *Political Organization of the Plains Indians*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Greif, Avner, and Jared Rubin. 2018. "Political Legitimacy and the Institutional Foundations of Limited Government." Working paper, Stanford University.

Grever, John 1982. "Louis XIV and the Dutch Assemblies: The Conflict about the Hague." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 7:235–49.

Grummitt, David, and Jean-Francois Lassalmonie. 2015. "Royal Public Finance (c. 1290–1523)." In *Government and Political Life in England and France, c. 1300–c. 1500*, ed. Christopher Fletcher, Jean-Phillippe Genet, and John Watts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guenée, Bernard. 1971. *L'occident au XIVe et XVe siècles: Les états*. Paris: PUF.

Guéry, Alain. 1984. "Le roi dépensier: Le don, la contrainte, et l'origine du système financier de la monarchie française d'ancien régime." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 39:1241–69.

————. 2008. "Du don à l'impôt: Libéralité et finances de la monarchie française d'ancien régime." In *La Société vue du Don*, ed. Philippe Chanial, 255–71. Paris: La Découverte.

Guizot, François. 1838. *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'Empire Romain*. Paris: Emile Perrin.

————. 1861. *History of the Origins of Representative Government in Europe*. London: Henry G. Bohn.

Gunn, J. A. W. 2008. "French Republicans and the Suffrage: The Birth of the Doctrine of False Consciousness." *French History* 22:28–50.

Guo, Jason Qiang. 2019. "The History of Taxation in China." Working paper, New York University.

Gutas, D. 1998. *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early Abbasid Society*. New York: Routledge.

Haber, Stephen. 2012a. "Rainfall and Democracy: Climate, Technology, and the Evolution of Economic and Political Institutions." Working paper, Stanford University.

————. 2012b. “Where Does Democracy Thrive: Climate, Technology, and the Evolution of Economic and Political Institutions.” Working paper, Stanford University.
Haggard, Stephan, and Robert R. Kaufman. 2016. “Democratization during the Third Wave.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 19:125–44.
Hally, David. 1994. “The Chiefdom of Coosa.” In *The Forgotten Centuries: Indians and Europeans in the American South, 1521–1704*, ed. Charles Hudson and Carmen Chaves Tesser. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
Halperin, Charles. 2000. “Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century.” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1:237–57.
Hansen, Mogens Herman. 1986. “The Origin of the Term *Demokratia*.” *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 11:35–36.
————. 1987. *The Athenian Assembly in the Age of Demosthenes*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
————. 1991. *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
————. 2000. *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures: An Investigation Conducted by the Copenhagen Polis Centre*. Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab.
————. 2006. *Polis: An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hansen, Mogens, and Thomas Heine Nielsen. 2004. *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hao, Yu, and Tianyang Xi. 2019. “Imperial Examination as a Representative Institution.” Working paper, Peking University.
Hariri, Jacob Gerner. 2012. “The Autocratic Legacy of Early Statehood.” *American Political Science Review* 106:471–94.
Harper, Kyle. 2018. *The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Harriss, G. L. 1963. “The Commons’ Petitions of 1340.” *English Historical Review* 78:625–54.
Hart, John P. 2001. “Maize, Matrilocality, Migration, and Northern Iroquoian Evolution.” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 8:151–82.
Hartemink, Alfred E., Pavel Krasilnikov, and J. G. Bockheim. 2013. “Soil Maps of the World.” *Geoderma* 207–8:256–67.
Hartman, Charles. 2015. “Sung Government and Politics.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 5: *Sung China, 960–1279 AD*, ed. Denis Twitchett and John W. Chaffee, 19–138. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hartwell, Robert. 1962. “A Revolution in the Chinese Iron and Coal Industries.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 21:153–62.
————. 1966. “Markets, Technology, and the Structure of Enterprise in the Development of the Eleventh-Century Chinese Iron and Steel Industry.” *Journal of Economic History* 26:29–58.
Harvey, Sally. 1971. “Domesday Book and Its Predecessors.” *English Historical Review* 86:753–73.
Heather, Peter. 2009. *Empires and Barbarians: The Fall of Rome and the Birth of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Heidenreich, Conrad. 1978. “Huron.” In *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. 15: *Northeast*, ed. Bruce Trigger, 418–41. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.
Henshall, Nicholas. 1992. *The Myth of Absolutism*. London: Routledge.

Herndon, Melvin. 1957. “Tobacco in Colonial Virginia: ‘The Sovereign Remedy.’ ” Williamsburg: The Virginia 350th Anniversary Celebration Corporation.

Herodotus. 2007. *The Histories*. Ed. Robert Strassler. New York: Anchor Books.

Hetherington, Marc. 1998. “The Political Relevance of Political Trust.” *American Political Science Review* 92:791–808.

————. 2005. *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hicks, Daniel L. 2013. “War and the Political Zeitgeist: Evidence from the History of Female Suffrage.” *European Journal of Political Economy* 31:60–81.

Higham, Charles. 2012. “The Long and Winding Road That Leads to Angkor.” *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 22:265–89.

Hill, Christopher. 1972. *The World Turned Upside Down*. New York: Penguin.

Ho, Ping-ti. 1959. *Studies in the Population of China, 1368–1953*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hoffman, Philip T. 2000. *Growth in a Traditional Society: The French Countryside, 1450–1815*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 2015. *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Holden, Alice. 1930. “The Imperative Mandate in the Spanish Cortes of the Middle Ages.” *American Political Science Review* 24:886–912.

Holt, J. C. 2015. *Magna Carta*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hoppit, Julian. 1996. “Patterns of Parliamentary Legislation, 1660–1800.” *Historical Journal* 39:109–31.

House of Commons Library. 2013. “The History of the Parliamentary Franchise.” Research Paper 13–14.

Howell, William. 2003. *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Howell, William, and Terry Moe. 2016. *Relic: How Our Constitution Undermines Effective Government*. New York: Basic Books.

Hsia, R. Po-chia. 2010. *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City: Matteo Ricci, 1552–1610*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Huang, Ray. 1974. *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-Century Ming China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 1998. “The Ming Fiscal Administration.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty*, ed. Denis C. Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote, 106–71. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hui, Victoria Tin-bor. 2005. *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Huning, Thilo, and Fabian Wahl. 2016. “You Reap What You Know: Observability of Soil Quality, and Political Fragmentation.” Working Paper No. 101, European Historical Economics Society.

Huntington, Samuel. 1966. “Political Modernization: America vs. Europe.” *World Politics* 18:378–414.

————. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

————. 1991a. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

————. 1991b. “Democracy’s Third Wave.” *Journal of Democracy* 2:12–34.

Hurstfield, Joel. 1967. “Was There a Tudor Despotism After All?” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17:83–108.
Hymes, Robert. 2015. “Sung Society and Social Change.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 5, part 2: *Sung China, 960–1279*, ed. John Chaffee and Denis Twitchett, 526–664. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Isakhan, Benjamin, and David Stockwell. 2011. *The Secret History of Democracy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
Isbell, William. 2010. *Mummies and Mortuary Monuments: A Postprocessual Prehistory of Central Andean Social Organization*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Ismard, Paulin. 2017. *Democracy’s Slaves: A Political History of Ancient Greece*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Israel, Jonathan. 2017. *The Expanding Blaze: How the American Revolution Ignited the World, 1775–1848*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Jacobsen, Thorkild. 1943. “Primitive Democracy in Ancient Mesopotamia.” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 2:159–72.
Jaimoukha, Amjad. 2001. *The Circassians: A Handbook*. New York: Palgrave.
James I, King of England. 1604. *A Counterblaste to Tobacco*. London: R. Barker.
Jia, Xin, Guanghui Dong, Hu Li, Katherine Brunson, FaHu Chen, Minmin Ma, Hui Wang, Chengbang An, and Keren Zhang. 2012. “The Development of Agriculture and Its Impact on Cultural Expansion during the Late Neolithic in the Western Loess Plateau, China.” *The Holocene* 23:85–92.
John, Richard. 1995. *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Johnson, David. 1977. *The Medieval Chinese Oligarchy*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
Johnson, Kimberley. 2010. *Reforming Jim Crow: Southern Politics and the State in the Age before Brown*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Johnson, Noel D., and Mark Koyama. 2014. “Tax Farming and the Origins of State Capacity in England and France.” *Explorations in Economic History* 51:1–20.
Jones, A. H. M. 1964. *The Later Roman Empire*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Jones, Eric. 1981. *The European Miracle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Jones, Susan Mann, and Philip A. Kuhn. 1978. “Dynastic Decline and the Roots of Rebellion.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 10: *Late Ch’ing, 1800–1911*, ed. John K. Fairbank, 107–62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Jordan, David W. 1987. *Foundations of Representative Government in Maryland, 1632–1715*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Jorgensen, Joseph. 1980. *Western Indians: Comparative Environments, Languages, and Cultures of 172 Western American Indian Tribes*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Company.
Kaldellis, Anthony. 2015. *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in the New Rome*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Kammen, Michael. 1969. *Deputyes & Libertyes*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
Kantorowicz, Ernst H. 1957. *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Karaman, K. Kivanç, and Şevket Pamuk. 2013. “Different Paths to the Modern State in Europe: The Interaction between Warfare, Economic Structure, and Political Regime.” *American Political Science Review* 107:603–26.
Kay, Richard. 2002. *The Council of Bourges, 1225: A Documentary History*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
Keep, J. L. H. 1970. “Russia, 1613–45.” In *The New Cambridge Modern History*. Vol. 4: *The Decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War, 1609–48/49*, ed. J. P. Cooper, 602–19. Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press.
Keightley, David. 1983. *The Origins of Chinese Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

————. 1999. "The Shang: China's First Historical Dynasty." In *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Michael Lowe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2000. *The Ancestral Landscape: Time, Space, and Community in Later Shang China (Ca. 1200–1045 B.C.)*. Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California–Berkeley.
Kennedy, Hugh. 1986. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*. Edinburgh: Pearson.

————. 1996. *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus*. London: Longman.

————. 2001. *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State*. London: Routledge.

————. 2004. *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World: The Rise and Fall of Islam's Greatest Dynasty*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press.

————. 2004. "The Decline and Fall of the First Muslim Empire." *Der Islam* 81:3–30.

————. 2015. "The Middle East in Islamic Late Antiquity." In *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States*, ed. Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2016. *Caliphate: The History of an Idea*. New York: Basic Books.
Keyssar, Alexander. 2000. *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*. New York: Basic Books.
Kielbowicz, Richard. 1989. *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700–1860s*. New York: Greenwood Press.
King, P. D. 1972. *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kiser, Edgar, and Steven Karceski. 2017. "Political Economy of Taxation." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20:75–92.
Klarman, Michael J. 2016. *The Framers' Coup: The Making of the United States Constitution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kleber, Kristin. 2017. "Administration in Babylonia." In *Administration in the Achaemenid Empire: Tracing the Imperial Signature*, ed. Bruno Jacob, Wouter Henkelman, and Matthew Stolper. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
Klinck, Anne L. 1982. "Anglo-Saxon Women and the Law." *Journal of Medieval History* 8:107–21.
Klinkner, Philip, with Rogers Smith. 1999. *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Knight, Vernon, and Vincas Steponaitis. 2007. "A New History of Moundville." In *Archaeology of the Moundville Chiefdom*, ed. Vernon Knight, Vincas Steponaitis, Lauren Michals, Paul Welch, Margaret Schoeninger, and Mary Lucas Powell. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
Knights, Mark. 2005. *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Ko, Chiu Yu, Mark Koyama, and Tuan-Hwee Sng. 2018. "Unified China and Divided Europe." *International Economic Review* 59:285–327.
Koenigsberger, H. G. 1992. "Review of José Ignacio Fortea Pérez, Monarquía y cortes en la Corona de Castilla: Las ciudades ante la politica fiscal de Felipe II." *European History Quarterly* 22:639–41.

Kohler, Timothy, and Michael Smith, eds. 2018. *Ten Thousand Years of Inequality: The Archaeology of Wealth Differences*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Kohler, T. A., M. E. Smith, A. Bogaard, G. M. Feinman, C. E. Peterson, A. Betzenhauser, M. Pailes, E. C. Stone, A. Marie Prentiss, T. J. Dennehy, L. J. Ellyson, L. M. Nicholas, R. K. Faulseit, A. Styring, J. Whitlam, M. Fochesato, T. A. Foor, and S. Bowles. 2017. "Greater Post-Neolithic Wealth Disparities in Eurasia than in North America and Mesoamerica." *Nature* 551:619–22.

Kokkonen, Andrej, and Anders Sundell. 2014. "Delivering Stability—Primogeniture and Autocratic Survival in European Monarchies, 1000–1800." *American Political Science Review* 108:438–53.

Kosto, Adam. 2003. "Reasons for Assembly in Catalonia and Aragon, 900–1200." In *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. P. S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert. Turnhout: Brepols.

Kramnick, Isaac. 1968. *Bolingbroke and His Circle*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Krause, Victor. 1890. "Geschichte Des Institutes Der Missi Dominici." *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 11, issue JG:193–300.

Krebs, Christopher. 2011. *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus's Germania from the Roman Empire to the Third Reich*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Krupenikov, I. A. 1992. *History of Soil Science from Its Inception to the Present*. New Delhi: Amerind Publishing.

Kuhn, Dieter. 2009. *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kuhn, Philip A. 1978. "The Taiping Rebellion." In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 10: *Late Ch'ing 1800–1911*, ed. John K. Fairbank, 264–317. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kulikowski, Michael. 2012. "The Western Kingdoms." In *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. Scott Fitzgerald Johnson. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kupperman, Karen. 1979. "Apathy and Death in Early Jamestown." *Journal of American History* 66:24–40.

Kuran, Timur. 2005. "The Absence of the Corporation in Islamic Law: Origins and Persistence." *American Journal of Comparative Law* 53:785–834.

————. 2011. *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 2013. "Religious Obstacles to Democratization in the Middle East: Past and Present." In *Annual Proceedings of the Wealth and Well-Being of Nations*, ed. Joshua Hall. Beloit, WI: Beloit College Press.

————. 2016. "Legal Roots of Authoritarian Rule in the Middle East: Civic Legacies of the Islamic Waqf." *American Journal of Comparative Law* 64:419–54.

————. 2018. "Islam and Economic Performance: Historical and Contemporary Links." *Journal of Economic Literature* 56:1292–1359.

Labrocherie, P. 1948. "Le paysan de 1848." In *L'esprit de 1848*, ed. Emmanuel Beau de Loménie. Mulhouse: Bader-Dufour.

Lambert, Tom. 2017. *Law and Order in Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lancaster, William, and Fidelity Lancaster. 2004. "Concepts of Leadership in Bedouin Society." In *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East: Elites Old and New in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, ed. John Haldon and Lawrence Conrad. Princeton: Darwin Press.

Lane, Melissa. 2014. *The Birth of Politics: Eight Greek and Roman Political Ideas and Why They Matter*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Larson, T. A. 1965. "Woman Suffrage in Wyoming." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 56:57–66.

Lauwers, Michel. 2012. “Pour une histoire de la dîme et du dominium écclésial.” In *La dîme L’Eglise et la société féodale*, ed. Michel Lauwers. Turnhout: Brepols.

Lawson, M. K. 1984. “The Collection of Danegeld and Heregeld in the Reigns of Aethelred II and Cnut.” *English Historical Review* 99:721–38.

Le Page du Pratz, Antoine Simon. 1774. *The History of Louisiana or of the Western Parts of Virginia and Carolina: Containing a Description of the Countries That Lie on Both Sides of the River Mississippi*. London: T. Becket.

Lecker, Michael. 2004. *The “Constitution” of Medina: Muhammad’s First Legal Document*. Princeton: Darwin Press.

Lee, Gyoung-Ah, Gary W. Crawford, Li Liu, and Xingcan Chen. 2007. “Plants and People from the Early Neolithic to Shang Periods in North China.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104:1087–92.

Legesse, Asmarom. 2000. *Oromo Democracy*. Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press.

Legge, James, trans. 2016. *Book of Documents*. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform.

Leslie, Stephen, Bruce Winney, Garrett Hellenthal, Dan Davison, Abdelhamid Boumertit, Tammy Day, Katarzyna Hutnik, Ellen C. Royrvik, Barry Cunliffe, Consortium Wellcome Trust Case Control, Consortium International Multiple Sclerosis Genetics, Daniel J. Lawson, Daniel Falush, Colin Freeman, Matti Pirinen, Simon Myers, Mark Robinson, Peter Donnelly, and Walter Bodmer. 2015. “The Fine-Scale Genetic Structure of the British Population.” *Nature* 519:309–14.

Levasseur, Emile. 1893. “Les prix: Aperçu de l’histoire économique de la valeur et du revenue de la terre en France du commencement du XIIIe siècle à la fin du XVIIIe.” *Journal de la société statistique de Paris* 34:383–403.

Levi, Margaret. 1988. *Of Rule and Revenue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 1997. *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Levin, Michael. 1992. *The Spectre of Democracy: The Rise of Modern Democracy as Seen by Its Critics*. New York: New York University Press.

Levin, Yuval. 2016. *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America’s Social Contract in the Age of Individualism*. New York: Basic Books.

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. 2002. “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.” *Journal of Democracy* 13:51–66.

————. 2015. “The Myth of Democratic Recession.” *Journal of Democracy* 26:45–58.

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown Books.

Lewis, Mark Edward. 1990. *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

————. 1999a. *Writing and Authority in Early China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

————. 1999b. “Warring States Political History.” In *Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Michael Loewe, 587–650. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2000. “The City-State in Spring-and-Autumn China.” In *A Comparative Study of the Thirty City-State Cultures: An Investigation*, ed. Mogens Herman Hansen, 259–373. Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

————. 2000. “The Han Abolition of Universal Military Service.” In *Warfare in Chinese History*, ed. Hans Van de Ven. Leiden: Brill.

————. 2006. *The Construction of Space in Early China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

————. 2007. *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

————. 2009a. *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

————. 2009b. *China between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Liebeschuetz, Wolf. 2015. *East and West in Late Antiquity*. Leiden: Brill.

Lilburne, John, William Walwyn, Thomas Prince, and Richard Overton. 1649. "An Agreement of the Free People of England." London: Gyles Calvert.

Lin, Chao. 1982. *The Socio-Political Systems of the Shang Dynasty*. Taipei: Institute of the Three Principles of the People, Academia Sinica.

Lin, Justin. 1995. "The Needham Puzzle: Why the Industrial Revolution Did Not Originate in China." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 43:269–92.

Lindsey, Brink, and Steven Teles. 2017. *The Captured Economy: How the Powerful Enrich Themselves, Slow Down Growth, and Increase Inequality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lippert, Julius. 1931. *The Evolution of Culture*. New York: George Allen & Unwin.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review* 53:69–105.

Liu, B., N. Wang, M. Chen, X. Wu, D. Mo, J. Liu, S. Xu, and Y. Zhuang. 2017. "Earliest Hydraulic Enterprise in China, 5,100 Years Ago." *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences* 114:13637–642.

Liu, William Guianglin. 2015. *The Chinese Market Economy, 1000–1500*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Lokkegaard, Frede. 1950. *Islamic Taxation in the Classical Period: With Special Reference to Circumstances in Iraq*. Copenhagen: Branner & Korch.

London, Jennifer. 2011. "The 'Circle of Justice.' " *History of Political Thought* 32:425–47.

Lopez, Robert S. 1976. *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lousse, Emile. 1937. "La formation des ordres dans la société médiévale." In *L'organisation corporative du moyen age a la fin de l'ancien regime*, 61–90. Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université.

Lowie, Robert. 1927. *The Origin of the State*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

————. 1954. *Indians of the Plains*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Loyn, Henry. 1984. *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England, 500–1087*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

————. 1992. "The Hundred in England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries." In *British Government and Administration: Studies Presented to S. B. Chrimes*, ed. H. Hearder and H. R. Loyn. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Lugard, Frederick. 1922. *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*. London: W. Blackwood and Sons.

Lukonin, V. G. 1983. "Political, Social and Administrative Institutions, Taxes and Trade." In *The Cambridge History of Iran: Seleucid Parthian: Volume 3: The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanid Periods*, ed. E. Yarshater, 681–746. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lust, Ellen, and David Waldner. 2015. "Unwelcome Change: Understanding, Evaluating, and Extending Theories of Democratic Backsliding." Working paper, Yale University.

Ma, Debin. 2012. “Political Institutions and Long-Run Economic Trajectory: Some Lessons from Two Millennia of Chinese Civilization.” In *Institutions and Comparative Economic Development*, ed. M. Aoki, T. Kuran, and G. Roland, 78–98. London: Macmillan.

Ma, Debin, and Jared Rubin. 2017. “The Paradox of Power: Understanding Fiscal Capacity in Imperial China and Absolutist Regimes.” London School of Economics.

Ma, Laurence J. C. 1971. “Commercial Development and Urban Change in Sung China (960–1279).” In *Secondary Commercial Development and Urban Change in Sung China (960–1279)*, ed. Laurence Ma. Ann Arbor: Department of Geography.

MacNutt, Francis. 1908. *Fernando Cortes: His Five Letters of Relation to the Emperor Charles V*. Cleveland: Arthur Clark Company.

Maddicott, J. R. 2009. “Origins and Beginnings to 1215.” In *A Short History of Parliament*, ed. Clyve Jones. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

————. 2010. *The Origins of the English Parliament, 924–1327*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Maddison, Angus. 1971. *Class Structure and Economic Growth: India & Pakistan since the Moghuls*. London: Taylor and Francis.

Madison, James. (1791) 1962. “Public Opinion.” In *The Papers of James Madison*, ed. William Hutchinson. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Maekawa, Kazuya. 1974. “Agricultural Production in Ancient Sumer: Chiefly from Lagash Materials.” Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto University.

Magaloni, Beatriz, Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, and Alexander Ruiz Euler. Forthcoming. “Public Good Provision and Traditional Governance in Indigenous Communities in Oaxaca, Mexico.” *Comparative Political Studies*.

Maitland, Frederic. 1907. *Domesday Book and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maloy, Jason. 2008. *The Colonial Origins of Modern Democratic Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2011. “The First Machiavellian Moment in America.” *American Journal of Political Science* 55:450–62.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary African and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Man, Yunlong. 1994. “English Colonization and the Formation of Anglo-American Polities, 1606–1664.” PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University.

Manin, Bernard. 1997. *The Principles of Representative Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, Charles. 2011. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*. New York: Vintage.

Mann, Michael. 1986. *The Sources of Social Power: A History from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mansbridge, Jayne. 1980. *Beyond Adversary Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Marongiu, Antonio. 1968. *Medieval Parliaments: A Comparative Study*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode.

————. 1975. “The Theory of Democracy and Consent in the Fourteenth Century.” In *Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe*, ed. Frederic L. Cheyette. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Marsham, Andrew. 2009. *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy: Accession and Succession in the First Muslim Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Marx, Karl. 1974. *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx*. Amsterdam: Internationaal, Instituut Voor Sociale Geschiedenis.
Mattingly, Daniel. 2018. "A Culture against Capitalism? How a Meritocratic Bureaucracy Stifled Long-Run Growth in China." Working paper, Yale University.
Mayor, Adrienne. 2014. *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Mayshar, Joram, Omer Moav, and Zvika Neeman. 2017. "Geography, Transparency, and Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 111:622–36.
Mayshar, Joram, Omer Moav, Zvika Neeman, and Luigi Pascali. 2017. "Cereals, Appropriability, and Hierarchy." Working paper, Warwick University.
Mazoyer, Marcel, and Laurence Roudart. 2006. *A History of World Agriculture from the Neolithic to the Current Crisis*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
McCaskie, T. C. 1995. *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
McCloskey, Deirdre. 2016. *Bourgeois Equality: How Ideas, Not Capital or Institutions, Enriched the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
McColley, Robert. 1986. "Slavery in Virginia, 1619–1660." In *Essays in Honor of Kenneth M. Stamp*, ed. Robert Abzug and Steven Maizlish. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
McCormick, John. 2011. *Machiavellian Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
McEvedy, Colin, and Richard Jones. 1978. *Atlas of World Population History*. New York: Penguin.
McKinley, Albert Edward. 1905. *The Suffrage Franchise in the Thirteen English Colonies in America*. Philadelphia: Ginn and Co.
McKitterick, Rosamond. 1983. *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987*. Harlow, UK: Longman.
Menaldo, Victor. 2016. *The Institutions Curse: Natural Resources, Politics, and Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Menard, Russell R. 1977. "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System." *Southern Studies* 16:355–90.
————. 1980. "The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617–1730: An Interpretation." *Research in Economic History* 5:110–16.
Mickisack, M. 1932. *The Parliamentary Representation of the English Boroughs during the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Milanovic, Branko, Peter Lindert, and Jeffrey Williamson. 2011. "Pre-Industrial Inequality." *Economic Journal* 121:255–72.
Miller, R. L. 1991. "Counting Calories in Egyptian Ration Texts." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 34:257–69.
Milner, George R., and George Chaplin. 2010. "Eastern North American Population at Ca. A.D. 1500." *American Antiquity* 75:707–26.
Milwright, Marcus. 2010. "Archaeology and Material Culture." In *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mokyr, Joel. 1990. *The Lever of Riches: Technological Creativity and Economic Progress*. New York: Oxford University Press.
————. 2000. "The Industrial Revolution and the Netherlands: Why Did It Not Happen?" *De Economist* 148:503–20.

————. 2009. “Intellectual Property Rights, the Industrial Revolution, and the Beginnings of Modern Economic Growth.” *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings* 99:349–55.

————. 2014. “Culture, Institutions, and Modern Growth.” In *Institutions, Property Rights, and Economic Growth: The Legacy of Douglass North*, ed. Sebastian Galiani and Itai Sened Galiani, 151–91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2017. *A Culture of Growth: The Origins of the Modern Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Møller, Jørgen. 2014. “Why Europe Avoided Hegemony: A Historical Perspective on the Balance of Power.” *International Studies Quarterly* 48:660–70.

————. 2015. “The Medieval Roots of Democracy.” *Journal of Democracy* 26:110–26.

————. 2017a. *State Formation, Regime Change, and Economic Development*. New York: Routledge.

————. 2017b. “The Birth of Representative Institutions: The Case of the Crown of Aragon.” *Social Science History* 41:175–200.

————. 2018. “The Ecclesiastical Roots of Representation and Consent.” *Perspectives on Politics* 16:1075–84.

Molyneaux, George. 2015. *The Formation of the English Kingdom in the Tenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Monahan, Arthur P. 1987. *Consent, Coercion, and Limit: The Medieval Origins of Parliamentary Democracy*. Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Monson, Andrew, and Walter Scheidel. 2015. *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moore, Barrington. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Moosvi, Shireen. 2015. *The Economy of the Mughal Empire c. 1595: A Statistical Study*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Moreno, Eduardo Manzano. 2010. “The Iberian Peninsula and North Africa.” In *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morgan, Edmund. 1975. *American Slavery, American Freedom*. New York: Norton.

Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1851. *League of the Iroquois*. Rochester: Sage and Brother.

————. (1877) 1985. *Ancient Society*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Morony, Michael. 1984. *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Muhlberger, Steven. 2008. “Democracy in Ancient India.” Working paper, Nipissing University.

Muhlberger, Steven, and Phil Paine. 1993. “Democracy’s Place in World History.” *Journal of World History* 14:23–45.

Muller, Jon. 1997. *Mississippian Political Economy*. New York: Plenum Publishing.

Murdock, George Peter. 1949. *Social Structure*. New York: Macmillan.

————. 1967. *Ethnographic Atlas*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Murdock, George Peter, and Caterina Provost. 1971. “Measurement of Cultural Complexity.” *Ethnology* 12:379–92.

Murdock, George Peter, and Douglas R. White. 1969. “Standard Cross-Cultural Sample.” *Ethnology* 8:329–69.

Murdock, George Peter, and Suzanne F. Wilson. 1972. “Settlement Patterns and Community Organization: Cross-Cultural Codes 3.” *Ethnology* 11:254–95.

Murray, Alexander Callander. 1988. “From Roman to Frankish Gaul: ‘Centenarii’ and ‘Centenae’ in the Administration of the Merovingian Kingdom.” *Traditio* 44:59–100.

Myerson, Roger B. 2008. “The Autocrat’s Credibility Problem and Foundations of the Constitutional State.” *American Political Science Review* 102:125–39.

Naismith, Rory, and David Woodman. 2018. Introduction to *Writing, Kingship, and Power in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Rory Naismith and David Woodman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nancy, Bermeo. 2016. “On Democratic Backsliding.” Working paper, Oxford University.

Nathan, Andrew J. 1983. “A Constitutional Republic: The Peking Government, 1916–28.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 12: *Republican China, 1912–1949*, ed. John K. Fairbank, 256–83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Neblo, Michael, Kevin Esterling, and David Lazer. 2018. *Politics with the People: Building a Directly Representative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Needham, Joseph. 1946. “On Science and Social Change.” *Science and Society* 10:225–51.

————. 1969. *The Grand Titration: Science and Society in East and West*. London: Routledge.

Needham, Joseph, and Francesca Bray. 1984. *Science and Civilisation in China: Biology and Biological Technology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Needham, Joseph, and Gwe-Djen Lu. 1981. “Chinese Geo-Botany in Statu Nascendi.” *Journal d’agriculture traditionnelle et botanique appliquée* 28:199–230.

Needham, Joseph, and Wang Ling. 1965. *Science and Civilisation in China*. Vol. 4: *Physics and Physical Technology: Part II: Mechanical Engineering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Neugebauer, Otto. 1945. *Mathematical Cuneiform Texts*. New Haven: American Oriental Society.

Neustadt, Richard. 1960. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: Free Press.

Nichols, Deborah L. 2015. “Intensive Agriculture and Early Complex Societies of the Basin of Mexico: The Formative Period.” *Ancient Mesoamerica* 26:407–21.

Nicolet, Claude. 2003. *La fabrique d’une nation: La France entre Rome et les Germains*. Paris: Perrin.

Nikolova, Elena. 2017. “Destined for Democracy? Labour Markets and Political Change in Colonial British America.” *British Journal of Political Science* 47:19–45.

Nikolova, Elena, and Milena Nikolova. 2017. “Suffrage, Labour Markets and Coalitions in Colonial Virginia.” *European Journal of Political Economy* 49:108–22.

Nissen, Hans. 1986. “The Archaic Texts from Uruk.” *World Archaeology* 17:317–34.

Norris, Pippa. 2017. “Is Western Democracy Backsliding? Diagnosing the Risks.” Working paper, Harvard University.

North, Douglass C. 1981. *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: Norton.

————. 1995. “The Paradox of the West.” In *The Origins of Modern Freedom*, ed. Ralph Davis. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

North, Douglass C., and Robert Paul Thomas. 1973. *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

North, Douglass, John Wallis, and Barry Weingast. 2009. *Violence and Social Orders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

North, Douglass, and Barry Weingast. 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England.” *Journal of Economic History* 49:803–32.

Ober, Josiah. 1989. *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 2003. “Conditions for Athenian Democracy.” In *The Making and Unmaking of Democracy: Lessons from History and World Politics*, ed. Theodore Rabb and Ezra Suleiman. New York: Routledge.

————. 2008. “The Original Meaning of ‘Democracy’: Capacity to Do Things, Not Majority Rule.” *Constellations* 15:3–9.

————. 2015. *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

O’Brien, Patrick, and Philip Hunt. 1993. “The Rise of a Fiscal State in England, 1485–1815.” *Historical Research* 66:129–76.

O’Donnell, James J. 2019. *The War for Gaul: A New Translation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Olivier, N. J. J. 1969. “Governmental Institutions of the Bantu Peoples.” In *Gouvernés et gouvernants: Première partie: Synthèse générale, civilisations archaiques, Islamiques et Orientales*, ed. John Gilissen. Bruxelles: Editions de la Librairie Encyclopédique.

Olsson, Ola. 2009. “On the Democratic Legacy of Colonialism.” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 37:534–51.

Olsson, Ola, and Christopher Paik. 2016. “A Western Reversal since the Neolithic? The Long-Run Impact of Early Agriculture.” Working paper, New York University Abu Dhabi.

Onorato, Massimilliano, Kenneth Scheve, and David Stasavage. 2014. “Technology and the Era of the Mass Army.” *Journal of Economic History* 74:449–81.

Ormrod, W. M. 1997. “Urban Communities and Royal Finance in England during the Later Middle Ages.” In *Actes: Colloqui corona, municipi i fiscalitat a la baixa edat mitjana*, ed. M. Sanchez and A Furió, 45–60. Lleida: Institut d’Estudios Ilerdencs.

Ostrogorski, M. 1891. “Woman Suffrage in Local Self-Government.” *Political Science Quarterly* 6:677–710.

Ostrogorsky, George. 1969. *History of the Byzantine State*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Ostrom, Elinor. 1990. *Governing the Commons*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ostrom, Elinor, and Roy Gardner. 1993. “Coping with Asymmetries in the Commons: Self-Governing Irrigation Systems Can Work.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7:93–112.

Ostrowski, Donald. 1990. “The Mongol Origins of Muscovite Political Institutions.” *Slavic Review* 49:525–42.

————. 2002. *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1589*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Painter, Nell Irwin. 2010. *The History of White People*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Palmer, R. R. 1959. *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Pamuk, Sevket. 2018. *Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey since 1820*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Pamuk, Sevket, and Maya Shatzmiller. 2014. “Plagues, Wages, and Economic Change in the Islamic Middle East, 700–1500.” *Journal of Economic History* 74:196–229.

Pankenier, David. 1995. “The Cosmopolitical Background of Heaven’s Mandate.” *Early China* 20:121–76.

Pauketat, Timothy. 2004. *Ancient Cahokia and the Mississippians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pauketat, Timothy, and Thomas Emerson. 1997. *Cahokia: Domination and Ideology in the Mississippian World*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Pawson, Eric. 1977. *Transport and Economy: The Turnpike Roads of Eighteenth Century Britain*. New York: Academic Press.

Payling, S. J. 1999. "County Parliamentary Elections in Fifteenth-Century England." *Parliamentary History* 18:237–59.

————. 2009. "The House of Commons, 1307–1529." In *A Short History of Parliament*, ed. Clyve Jones. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Perry, Elizabeth. 2015. "The Populist Dream of Chinese Democracy." *Journal of Asian Studies* 74:903–15.

Perry, Elizabeth, and Ellen V. Fuller. 1991. "China's Long March to Democracy." *World Policy Journal* 8:663–85.

Perry, Richard, and John C. Cooper. 1959. *Sources of Our Liberties: Documentary Origins of Individual Liberties in the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights*. Chicago: American Bar Foundation.

Petit-Dutaillis, Charles. 1978. *The French Commune in the Middle Ages*. Amsterdam: North-Holland.

Philippon, Thomas. 2019. *The Great Reversal: How America Gave Up on Free Markets*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Piketty, Thomas. 2001. *Les hauts revenus en France au XXe siècle*. Paris: Grasset.

————. 2014. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pincus, Steve. 2009. *1688: The First Modern Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Pines, Yuri. 2009. *Envisioning Eternal Empire: Chinese Political Thought of the Warring States Era*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Pirenne, Henri. 1910. *Les anciennes démocraties des Pays-Bas*. Paris: Flammarion.

Pitkin, Hanna. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Platonova, Natalia. 2009. "Peter the Great's Government Reforms and Accounting Practice in Russia." *Accounting History* 14:437–64.

Pocock, J. G. A. 1975. *The Machiavellian Moment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Poe, Marshall. 2006. "The Central Government and Its Institutions." In *The Cambridge History of Russia*. Vol. 1: *From Early Rus' to 1689*, ed. Maureen Perrie, 433–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pole, J. R. 1969. *Political Representation in England and the Origins of the American Republic*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pollock, Susan. 1999. *Ancient Mesopotamia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pomeranz, Kenneth. 2000. *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Post, Gaines. 1943. "Plena Potestas and Consent in Medieval Assemblies: A Study in Romano-Canonical Procedure and the Rise of Representation, 1150–1325." *Traditio* 1:355–408.

————. 1946. "A Romano-Canonical Maxim, 'quod omnes tangit,' in Bracton." *Traditio* 4:197–251.

————. 1964. *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Postan, Michael. 1973. "Why Was Science Backward in the Middle Ages?" In *Essays on Medieval Agriculture and General Problems of the Medieval Economy*, ed. Michael Postan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Potter, Mark, and Jean-Laurent Rosenthal. 1997. "Politics and Public Finance in France: The Estates of Burgundy." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 27:577–612.

Prak, Maarten. 1997. "Burghers into Citizens: Urban and National Citizenship in the Netherlands during the Revolutionary Era (c. 1800)." *Theory and Society* 26:403–20.

————. 2018. *Citizens without Nations: Urban Citizenship in Europe and the World, c. 1000–1789*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prak, Maarten, Marcel Hoogenboom, and Patrick Wallis. 2018. "Troublesome Transitions and Historical Continuities: Citizenship in Europe, 1600–2000." In *Moving beyond Barriers*, ed. Sandra Seubert, Marcel Hoogenboom, Trudie Knijn, Sybe de Vries, and Frans van Waarden. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Price, J. L. 1994. *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pritchard, James. 2004. *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670–1730*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pulteney, William. 1734. *The Late Excise Scheme Dissected*. London: J. Dickinson.

Quillet, Jeannine. 1988. "Community, Counsel, and Representation." In *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350–c. 1450*, ed. J. H. Burns, 520–72. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Raaflaub, Kurt. 2004. "Homer and the Beginning of Political Thought in Greece." In *Ancient Greek Democracy: Readings and Sources*, ed. Eric Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell.

————. 2007. "The Breakthrough of Dēmokratia in Mid-Fifth-Century Athens." In *The Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, ed. Kurt Raaflaub, Josiah Ober, and Robert Wallace. Berkeley: University of California Press.

————. 2013. "Archaic and Classical Greek Reflections on Politics and Government: From Description to Conceptualization, Analysis, and Theory." In *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, ed. Hans Beck. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Raaflaub, Kurt, and Nathan Rosenstein, eds. 1999. *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: Asia, the Mediterranean, Europe, and Mesoamerica*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rabushka, Alvin. 2008. *Taxation in Colonial America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Raffler, Pia. 2018. "Does Political Oversight of the Bureaucracy Increase Accountability? Field Experimental Evidence from an Electoral Autocracy." Working paper, Harvard University.

Rakove, Jack. 1982. "The Legacy of the Articles of Confederation." *Publius* 12:45–66.

————. 2000. "The Articles of Confederation, 1775–1783." In *A Companion to the American Revolution*, ed. Jack Greene and J. R. Pole. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ray, P. Orman. 1919. "The World-Wide Woman Suffrage Movement." *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law* 3:220–38.

Rembold, Ingrid. 2017. *Conquest and Christianization: Saxony and the Carolingian World, 772–888*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Revkin, Mara. 2018. "When Terrorists Govern: Protecting Civilians in Conflicts with State-Building Armed Groups." *Harvard National Security Journal* 9:100–145.

Reynolds, Susan. 1984. *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rhys Davids, Thomas. 1902. *Buddhist India*. London: Fisher and Unwin.

————. 1922. "The Early History of the Buddhists." In *Cambridge History of India*. Vol. 1: *Ancient India*, ed. E. J. Rapson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, John F. 1993. *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ridolfi, Leonardo. 2016. “The French Economy in the Longue Durée: A Study on Real Wages, Working Days, and Economic Performance from Louis IX to the Revolution (1250–1789).” PhD diss., IMT Lucca.

Rigaudière, Albert. 2000. “Voter sans les villes de France au Moyen Âge (Xiiie–Xve S.).” *Comptes-rendus des séances de l’année: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 144:1439–71.

Roach, Levi. 2013. *Kingship and Consent in Anglo-Saxon England, 871–978*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2016. *Æthelred the Unready*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Roberts, Margaret. 2018. *Censored: Distraction and Diversion inside China’s Great Firewall*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Robinson, Chase. 2000. *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2010. *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robinson, Eric. 1997. *The First Democracies: Early Popular Government outside Athens*. Berlin: Franz Steiner Verlag.

————. 2011. *Democracy beyond Athens: Popular Government in the Greek Classical Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roffe, David. 2000. *Domesday: The Inquest and the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

————. 2007. *Decoding Domesday*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Rokkan, Stein. 1973. “Cities, States, and Nations: A Dimensional Model for the Study of Contrasts in Development.” In *Building States and Nations: Models and Data Resources*, ed. Stein Rokkan and S. Eisenstadt, 73–97. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

————. 1975. “Dimensions of State Formation and Nation Building: A Possible Paradigm for Research on Variations within Europe.” In *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly, 562–600. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rosanvallon, Pierre. 1992. *Le Sacre du citoyen*. Paris: Gallimard.

Rosenthal, Jean-Laurent. 1990. *The Fruits of Revolution: Property Rights, Litigation and French Agriculture, 1700–1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenthal, Jean-Laurent, and R. Bin Wong. 2011. *Before and Beyond Divergence: The Politics of Economic Change in China and Europe*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rosenthal, Joel. 1964. “The Public Assembly in the Time of Louis the Pious.” *Traditio* 20:25–40.

Ross, Marc Howard. 1983. “Political Decision Making and Conflict: Additional Cross-Cultural Codes and Scales.” *Ethnology* 22:169–92.

Rossabi, Morris. 2005. *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*. London: Folio Society.

Rossiter, Clinton. 1961. *The Federalist Papers*. New York: New American Library.

Rowe, William T. 2009. *China’s Last Empire: The Great Qing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rowe, John Howland. 1957. “The Incas under Spanish Colonial Institutions.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 376:155–99.

Rowley, Charles K., and Nathanael Smith. 2009. “Islam’s Democracy Paradox: Muslims Claim to Like Democracy, So Why Do They Have So Little?” *Public Choice* 139:273–99.

Roy, Tirthankar. 2013. *An Economic History of Early Modern India*. London: Routledge.

Rubin, Jared. 2017. *Rulers, Religion and Riches: Why the West Got Rich and the Middle East Did Not*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Runciman, David. 2018. *How Democracy Ends*. New York: Basic Books.

Sahlins, Marshall D. 1963. “Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5:285–303.
Sanday, Peggy. 1981. *Female Power and Male Dominance: On the Origins of Sexual Inequality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Sanders, Seth. 2004. “What Was the Alphabet For? The Rise of Written Vernaculars and the Making of Israelite National Literature.” *Maarav* 11:25–56.
Schaeder, H. H. 2017. “Sawad.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill.
Schama, Simon. 1989. *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York: Random House.
Scheidel, Walter. 2006. “Population and Demography.” Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics.
————. 2015a. *State Power in Ancient China and Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
————. 2015b. “State Revenue and Expenditure in the Han and Roman Empires.” Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics.
————. 2017. *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
————. 2019. *Escape from Rome: The Failure of Empire and the Making of the Modern World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Scheve, Kenneth, and David Stasavage. 2010. “The Conscription of Wealth: Mass Warfare and the Demand for Progressive Taxation.” *International Organization* 64:529–61.
————. 2012. “Democracy, War, and Wealth: Lessons from Two Centuries of Inheritance Taxation.” *American Political Science Review* 106:81–102.
————. 2016. *Taxing the Rich: A History of Fiscal Fairness in the United States and Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
————. 2017. “Wealth Inequality and Democracy.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20:451–68.
Schlesinger, Arthur. 1973. *The Imperial Presidency*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
Schwartzberg, Melissa. 2014. *Counting the Many: The Origins and Limits of Supermajority Rule*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Scordia, Lydwine. 2005. *“Le Roi doit vivre du sien”: La Théorie de l’impôt en France (Xiiie–Xve Siècles)*. Paris: Institut d’Etudes Augustiniennes.
Scott, James C. 1999. *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
————. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
————. 2017. *Against the Grain*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Sen, Amartya. 2005. *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity*. London: Picador.
Senner, Wayne. 1989. *The Origins of Writing*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Seri, Andrea. 2006. *Local Power in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia*. Sheffield: Equinox.
Service, Elman. 1966. *The Hunters*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Sharlach, Tonia. 2004. *Provincial Taxation and the Ur III State*. Leiden: Brill.
Sharma, Jagdish Prasad. 1965. “The Question of the Vidátha in Vedic India.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 97:43–56.
————. 1968. *Republics in Ancient India, c. 1500 B.C.–500 B.C.* Leiden: Brill.

Sharma, Ram Sharan. 1952. “Vidatha: The Earliest Folk-Assembly of the Indo-Aryans.” *Journal of the Bihar Research Society* 38:429–48.

Sharp, James Roger. 1993. *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Shatzmiller, Maya. 2011. “Economic Performance and Economic Growth in the Early Islamic World.” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54:132–84.

Shaw, Denis. 2006. “Towns and Commerce.” In *The Cambridge History of Russia*. Vol. 1: *From Early Rus’ to 1689*, ed. Maureen Perrie, 298–316. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sheehan, Colleen. 2004. “Madison v. Hamilton: The Battle over Republicanism and the Role of Public Opinion.” *American Political Science Review* 98:405–24.

————. 2009. *James Madison and the Spirit of Republican Self-Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shennan, Stephen. 2018. *The First Farmers of Europe: An Evolutionary Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shimony, Annemarie Anrod. 1961. “Conservatism among the Iroquois at the Six Nations Reserve.” New Haven: Publications in Anthropology, Yale University.

Sijpesteijn, Petra. 2007. “The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Beginning of Muslim Rule.” In *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. Roger Bagnall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2013. *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Silva, Alan. 1999. “Increase Mather’s 1693 Election Sermon: Rhetorical Innovation and the Reimagination of Puritan Authority.” *Early American Literature* 34:48–77.

Simonton, Matthew. 2017. *Classical Greek Oligarchy: A Political History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Skinner, Quentin. 2002. *Visions of Politics*. Vol. 2: *Renaissance Virtues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Skocpol, Theda. 1997. “The Tocqueville Problem.” *Social Science History* 21:455–79.

Skocpol, Theda, and Vanessa Williamson. 2013. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Slantchev, Branislav, and Tony Kravitz. 2019. “No Taxation without Administration: Wealth Assessment in the Formation of a Fiscal State.” Working paper, University of California–San Diego.

Slivinski, Al, and Nathan Sussman. 2009. “Taxation Mechanisms and Growth in Medieval Paris.” Working paper, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Smith, Bruce. 1996. “Agricultural Chiefdoms of the Eastern Woodlands.” In *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*. Vol. 1: *North America*, ed. Bruce G. Trigger and Wilcomb E. Washburn, 267–324. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Michael. 2012. *The Aztecs*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

————. 2014. “The Aztecs Paid Taxes, Not Tribute.” *Mexicon* 36:19–22.

————. 2015. “The Aztec Empire.” In *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Premodern States*, ed. Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2017. “The Teotihuacan Anomaly: The Historical Trajectory of Urban Design in Ancient Central Mexico.” *Open Archaeology* 3:175–93.

Smith, Michael, Timothy Dennehy, April Kamp-Whittaker, Emily Colon, and Rebecca Harkness. 2014. “Quantitative Measures of Wealth Inequality in Ancient Central Mexican Communities.” *Advances in Archaeological Practice* 2:311–23.

Smith, Paul. 2009. “Shen-Tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang an-Shih, 1067–1085.” In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 5: *The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, 347–483. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Vernon T. 2000. *Coosa: The Rise and Fall of a Southeastern Mississippian Chiefdom*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Sng, Tuan-Hwee. 2014. “Size and Dynastic Decline: The Principal-Agent Problem in Late Imperial China, 1700–1850.” *Explorations in Economic History* 54:107–27.

Snow, Dean. 1994. *The Iroquois*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

————. 1995. “Microchronology and Demographic Evidence Relating to the Size of Pre-Columbian North American Indian Populations.” *Science* 268:1601–4.

Song, Jaeyoon. 2016. “Debates on Just Taxation in Ma Duanlin’s Comprehensive Survey.” In *State Power in China, 900–1325*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Paul Jakov Smith, 244–74. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Souryi, Pierre-François. 2003. “Des communautés monastiques dans le Japon médiéval.” In *Qui Veut Prendre La Parole?* ed. Marcel Detienne. Paris: Seuil.

Spence, Jonathan D. 2002. “The K’ang-Hsi Reign.” In *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 9, ed. Willard J. Peterson, 120–82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Squatriti, Paolo. 2014. “Of Seeds, Seasons, and Seas: Andrew Watson’s Medieval Agrarian Revolution Forty Years Later.” *Journal of Economic History* 74:1205–20.

Squire, Peverill. 2012. *The Evolution of American Legislatures*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Stasavage, David. 2003. *Public Debt and the Birth of the Democratic State: France and Great Britain, 1688–1789*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2010. “When Distance Mattered: Geographic Scale and the Development of European Representative Assemblies.” *American Political Science Review* 104:625–43.

————. 2011. *States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 2014. “Was Weber Right? The Role of Urban Autonomy in Europe’s Rise.” *American Political Science Review* 108:337–54.

————. 2015. “Why Did Public Debt Originate in Europe?” In *Fiscal Regimes and the Political Economy of Pre-Modern States*, ed. Andrew Monson and Walter Scheidel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2016. “Representation and Consent: Why They Arose in Europe and Not Elsewhere.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 19:145–62.

————. 2018. “When Inclusive Institutions Failed: Lessons from the Democratic Revolutions of the Middle Ages.” Working paper, New York University.

Steinfeld, Robert. 1989. “Property and Suffrage in the Early American Republic.” *Stanford Law Review* 41:335–76.

Steinhilber, Friedhelm, Jose A. Abreu, Jürg Beer, Irene Brunner, Marcus Christl, Hubertus Fischer, Ulla Heikkilä, Peter W. Kubik, Mathias Mann, Ken G. McCracken, Heinrich Miller, Hiroko Miyahara, Hans Oerter, and Frank Wilhelms. 2012. “9,400 Years of Cosmic Radiation and Solar Activity from Ice Cores and Tree Rings.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109:5967.

Steinkeller, Piotr. 1991. “The Administrative and Economic Organization of the Ur Iii State: The Core and the Periphery.” In *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient*

Near East, ed. McGuire Gibson and Robert Gibbs, 15–34. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Stenlås, Niklas. 2001. "Demokratins Vedersakare? Högerns Kamp För Och Emot Demokratin." In *Rösträtten 80 År: En Forskarantologi*, ed. Christer Jönsson, 55–70. Stockholm: Justitiedepartementet.
Stenton, Frank. 1971. *Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Stephenson, Judy. 2018. " 'Real' Wages? Contractors, Workers, and Pay in London Building Trades, 1650–1800." *Economic History Review* 71:106–32.
Stewart, Donald H. 1969. *The Opposition Press of the Federalist Period*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Stocking, Rachel L. 2000. *Bishops, Councils, and Consensus in the Visigothic Kingdom, 589–633*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Stone, Lawrence. 1972. *The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529–1642*. New York: Harper and Row.
Stone, Merlin. 1976. *When God Was a Woman*. New York: Harcourt.
Strauss, Julia C. 1997. "The Evolution of Republican Government." *China Quarterly* 150:329–51.
————. 2006. "Morality, Coercion and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC: Regime Consolidation and After, 1949–1956." *China Quarterly* 188:891–912.
Strayer, Joseph. 1970. *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
————. 1980. *The Reign of Philip the Fair*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Strayer, Joseph, and Charles Taylor. 1939. *Studies in Early French Taxation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Stubbs, William. 1874–78. *Constitutional History of England in Its Origin and Development*. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
————. 1897. *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History and Kindred Subjects*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
————. 1900. *Lectures on Medieval and Modern History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Sullivan, Richard. 1989. "England's 'Age of Invention': The Acceleration of Patents and Patentable Invention during the Industrial Revolution." *Explorations in Economic History* 26:424–52.
Swann, Julian. 2003. *Provincial Power and Absolute Monarchy: The Estates General of Burgundy, 1661–1790*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Swanton, Michael J., ed. 1998. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. New York: Routledge.
Szlechter, Emile. 1968. "Les assemblées en Mésopotamie ancienne." In *Liber Memorialis Georges De Lagarde*, ed. Antonio Marongiu. Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts.
Tackett, Nicolas. 2014. *The Destruction of the Medieval Chinese Aristocracy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.
Taylor, John. 1794. *A Definition of Parties; or, The Political Effects of the Paper System Considered*. Philadelphia: Francis Bailey.
Teele, Dawn. 2018. *Forging the Franchise: The Political Origins of the Women's Vote*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Teng, Ssu-yü. 1943. "Chinese Influence on the Western Examination System." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7:267–312.
Thapar, Romila. 1984. *From Lineage to State: Social Formations in the Mid-First Millennium B.C. in the Ganga Valley*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Thompson, Elizabeth. 2013. *Justice Interrupted: The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Thornton, Russell. 2000. “Population History of Native North Americans.” In *A Population History of North America*, ed. Michael Haines and Richard Steckel. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tierney, Brian. 1982. *Religion, Law, and the Growth of Constitutional Thought, 1150–1650*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 1983. “The Idea of Representation in the Medieval Councils of the West.” In *The Ecumenical Council*, ed. Peter Huizing and Knut Wulf. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

Tilly, Charles. 1992. *Coercion, Capital and European States*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Titow, J. Z. 1972. *Winchester Yields: A Study in Medieval Agricultural Productivity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tooker, Elisabeth. 1978. “The League of the Iroquois: Its History, Politics, and Ritual.” In *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. 15: *Northeast*, ed. Bruce Trigger, 418–41. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

————. 1984. “Women in Iroquois Society.” In *Extending the Rafters: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Iroquoian Studies*, ed. Michael Foster, Jack Campisi, and Marianne Mithun. Albany: State University of New York Press.

————. 1991. *An Ethnography of Huron Indians, 1615–1649*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Tracy, James. 1994. “Taxation and State Debt.” In *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation*, ed. Thomas Brady, Heiko Oberman, and James Tracy. Leiden: Brill.

Trigger, Bruce. 1963. “Order and Freedom in Huron Society.” *Anthropologica* 5:151–69.

————. 1976. *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

————, ed. 1978a. *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. 15: *Northeast*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

————. 1978b. “Iroquoian Matriliny.” *Pennsylvania Archaeologist* 48:55–65.

————. 1993. *Early Civilizations: Ancient Egypt in Context*. Cairo: American University of Cairo Press.

————. 2002. *The Huron: Farmers of the North*. 2nd ed. Mason, OH: Cengage Learning.

————. 2003. *Understanding Early Civilizations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tucker, Joshua A., Yannis Theocharis, Margaret E. Roberts, and Pablo Barberá. 2017. “From Liberation to Turmoil: Social Media and Democracy.” *Journal of Democracy* 28:46–59.

Tuden, Arthur, and Catherine Marshall. 1972. “Political Organization: Cross-Cultural Codes 4.” *Ethnology* 11:436–64.

Turner, Michael, and Dennis Mills, eds. 1986. *Land and Property: The English Land Tax, 1692–1832*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.

Turner, Raymond. 1927. “The Excise Scheme of 1733.” *English Historical Review* 42:34–57.

Twitchett, Denis. 1983. *Printing and Publishing in Medieval China*. New York: Frederic C. Bell.

Ulph, Owen. 1951. “The Mandate System and Representation to the Estates General under the Old Regime.” *Journal of Modern History* 23:225–31.

Upham, Frank. 2018. *The Great Property Fallacy: Theory, Reality, and Growth in Developing Countries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Urton, Gary. 2017. *Inka History in Knots: Reading Khipus as Primary Sources*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

van Bavel, Bas. 2010. *Manors and Markets: Economy and Society in the Low Countries, 500–1600*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

————. 2016. *The Invisible Hand: How Market Economies Have Emerged and Declined since 500*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Zanden, Jan Luiten. 2016. "Accounting for the Little Divergence." Working paper, Utrecht University.

van Zanden, Jan Luiten, Eltjo Buringh, and Maarten Bosker. 2012. "The Rise and Decline of European Parliaments, 1188–1789." *Economic History Review* 65:835–61.

van Zanden, Jan Luiten, and Arthur van Riel. 2004. *The Strictures of Inheritance: The Dutch Economy in the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Vansina, Jan. 1978. *The Children of Woot: A History of the Kuba Peoples*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

————. 1989. "Deep-Down Time: Political Tradition in Central Africa." *History in Africa* 16:341–62.

————. 1990. *Paths in the Rainforests: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

————. 1998. "Government in Kasai before the Lunda." *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 31:1–22.

————. 1999. "Pathways of Political Development in Equatorial Africa and Neoevolutionary Theory." In *Beyond Chiefdoms: Pathways to Political Complexity in Africa*, ed. Susan Keech McIntosh. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 2004. *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Varlet, Jean-François. 1792. "Projet d'un mandat spécial et impératif." Paris: Imprimé aux frais des sans-culottes.

Vasey, Daniel. 1992. *An Ecological History of Agriculture, 10,000 B.C.–A.D. 10,000*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.

Vaughan, Alden, and Virginia Mason Vaughan. 1997. "Elizabethan Representation of Sub-Saharan Africans." *William and Mary Quarterly* 54:19–44.

Vaughan, Virginia Mason. 2005. *Performing Blackness on English States, 1500–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vehrencamp, Sandra L. 1983. "A Model for the Evolution of Despotic versus Egalitarian Societies." *Animal Behaviour* 31:667–82.

Veitch, John. 1986. "Repudiations and Confiscations by the Medieval State." *Journal of Economic History* 46:31–36.

Verbeken, Auguste. 1933. "Accession au pouvoir chez certains tribus du Congo par systeme électif." *Congo: Revue générale de la colonie belge* 2:653–57.

Vigier, Philippe. 1991. "La République à la conquête des paysans, les paysans à la conquête du suffrage universel." *Politix* 15:7–12.

Villers, Robert. 1984. "Réflexions sur les premiers états généraux de France au début du XIVème siècle." *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 4:93–97.

Vincent, Nicholas. 2015. *Magna Carta: Origins and Legacy*. Oxford: Bodleian Library.

Von Falkenhausen, Lothar. 2006. *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000–250 BC)*. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press.

von Glahn, Richard. 2016. *The Economic History of China from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Waines, David. 1977. "The Third Century Internal Crisis of the Abbasids." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 20:282–306.

Walker J. T. 2015. "National Income in Domesday England." In *Money, Prices and Wages: Essays in Honour of Professor Nicholas Mayhew*, ed. M. Allen and D. Coffman. Palgrave Studies in the History of Finance. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wang, Fei-Ling. 2005. "Brewing Tensions while Maintaining Stabilities: The Dual Role of the Hukou System in Contemporary China." *Asian Perspective* 29:85–124.

Wang, Haicheng. 2014. *Writing and the Ancient State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wang, Wensheng. 2014. *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates: Crisis and Reform in the Qing Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wang, Xin, Benjamin T. Fuller, Pengcheng Zhang, Songmei Hu, Yaowu Hu, and Xue Shang. 2018. "Millet Manuring as a Driving Force for the Late Neolithic Agricultural Expansion of North China." *Scientific Reports* 8:5552.

Wang, Yuhua. 2017. "Sons and Lovers: Political Stability in China and Europe before the Great Divergence." Working paper, Harvard University,

Wareham, Andrew. 2012. "Fiscal Policies and the Institution of a Tax State in Anglo-Saxon England within a Comparative Context." *Economic History Review* 65:910–31.

Warkentin, Benno. 2006. *Footprints in the Soil: People and Ideas in Soil History*. New York: Elsevier.

Watson, Andrew M. 1974. "The Arab Agricultural Revolution and Its Diffusion, 700–1100." *Journal of Economic History* 34:8–35.

————. 1983. *Agricultural Innovation in the Early Islamic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

————. 1995. "Arab and European Agriculture in the Middle Ages: A Case of Restricted Diffusion." In *Agriculture in the Middle Ages: Technology, Practice, and Representation*, ed. D. E. L. Sweeney, 62–75. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Watts, J., O. Sheehan, Q. D. Atkinson, J. Bulbulia, and R. D. Gray. 2016. "Ritual Human Sacrifice Promoted and Sustained the Evolution of Stratified Societies." *Nature* 532:228–31.

Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wei Ze, David. 1995. "Printing as an Agent of Social Stability: The Social Organization of Book Production in China during the Sung Dynasty." PhD diss., Simon Fraser University.

White, Lynn. 1972. "The Expansion of Technology, 500–1500." In *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, ed. Carlo Cipolla. Glasgow: Collins.

Whitehead, David. 1986. *The Demes of Attica, 508/7–ca. 250 B.C.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Whyte, Martin King. 1978. *The Status of Women in Preindustrial Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Wickham, Chris. 1984. "The Other Transition: From the Ancient World to Feudalism." *Past & Present* 103:3–36.

————. 1997. "Lineages of Western European Taxation, 1000–1200." In *Actes: Colloqui corona, municipi i fiscalitat a la baixa edat mitjana*, ed. M. Sanchez and A. Furió. Lleida: Institut d'Estudios Ilerdencs.

————. 2005. *Framing the Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

————. 2009. *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000*. London: Allen Lane.

————. 2015. *Sleepwalking into a New World: The Emergence of Italian City Communes in the Twelfth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

————. 2016. *Medieval Europe*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

————. 2017. "Consensus and Assemblies in the Romano-Germanic Kingdoms: A Comparative Approach." In *Recht und Konsens im Frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Verena Epp and Christoph Meyer, 389–426. Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.

Wiesehofer, Josef. 2010. "The Late Sasanian Near East." In *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilks, Ivor. 1975. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, Basil. 1939. *The Whig Supremacy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Winiwarter, Verena. 2006a. "Soil Scientists in Ancient Rome." In *Footprints in the Soil: People and Ideas in Soil History*, ed. Benno Warkentin. New York: Elsevier Science.

————. 2006b. "Prolegomena to a History of Soil Knowledge in Europe." In *Soils and Societies: Perspectives from Environmental History*, ed. J. R. Mcneill and Verena Winiwarter, 177–215. Cambridge: White Horse Press.

Wittfogel, Karl A. 1957. *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wong, Roy Bin. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

————. 2012. "Taxation and Good Governance in China, 1500–1914." In *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914*, ed. Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien, 353–77. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wood-Legh, K. L. 1932. "The Knights' Attendance in the Parliaments of Edward III." *English Historical Review* 47:398–413.

Woodcroft, Bennet. 1854. *Titles of Patents of Invention, Chronologically Arranged*. London: Queen's Printing Office.

Wu, Qinglong, Zhijun Zhao, Li Liu, Darryl E. Granger, Hui Wang, David J. Cohen, Xiaohong Wu, Maolin Ye, Ofer Bar-Yosef, Bin Lu, Jin Zhang, Peizhen Zhang, Daoyang Yuan, Wuyun Qi, Linhai Cai, and Shibiao Bai. 2016. "Outburst Flood at 1920 BCE Supports Historicity of China's Great Flood and the Xia Dynasty." *Science* 353:579–82.

Xinhui, Luo. 2015. "Omens and Politics: The Zhou Concept of the Mandate of Heaven as Seen in the Chengwu Manuscript." In *Ideology of Power and Power of Ideology in Early China*, ed. Yuri Pines, Paul Goldin, and Martin Kern. Leiden: Brill.

Xu, Yi, Bas van Leeuwen, and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2013. "Urbanization in China, ca. 1100–1900." Working paper, Utrecht University.

Yang, Guobin. 2009. *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Yates, Robin D. S. 1997. "The City-State in Ancient China." In *The Archaeology of City-States: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, ed. Deborah Nichols and Thomas Charlton. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Yee, Cordell. 1994. “Chinese Maps in Political Culture.” In *The History of Cartography*. Vol. 2, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Yoffee, Norman. 1995. “Political Economy in Early Mesopotamian States.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:281–311.
Yom, Sean. 2015. *From Resilience to Revolution: How Foreign Interventions Destabilize the Middle East*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Yoshinobu, Shiba. 1970. *Commerce and Society in Sung China*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Young, Andrew T. 2017. “Hospitalitas: Barbarian Settlements and Constitutional Foundations of Medieval Europe.” *Journal of Institutional Economics* 14:1–23.
Young, Crawford. 1994. *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Young, Jason. 2013. *China’s Hukou System: Markets, Migrants and Institutional Change*. New York: Palgrave.
Zarra-Nezhad, Mansour. 2004. “A Brief History of Money in Islam and Estimating the Value of the Dirham and Dinar.” *Review of Islamic Economics* 8:51–65.
Zheng, Xiaowei. 2018. *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Zhihong, Shi. 2018. *Agricultural Development in Qing China: A Quantitative Study, 1661–1911*. Leiden: Brill.
Zuckerman, Michael. 1968. “The Social Context of Democracy in Massachusetts.” *William and Mary Quarterly* 25:523–44.

INDEX

Abu Bakr (caliph), 169
accountability: the Circle of Justice as a Sasanian concept of, 173; in early democracy, 25; limited form of in dynastic China, 142–43, 307
Acemoglu, Daron, 237
Ackerman, Bruce, 298
Æthelred "the Unready" (king of the Anglo-Saxons), 114
Æthelstan (king of the Anglo-Saxons), 200–201
Africa
—autocracy: in precolonial, 42–43, 53–54; prevailing over democracy in post-colonial, 288–90
—democracy: autocracy prevailing over in post-colonial, 288–90; democratization, 258, 288; democratization, new wave of, 290–92; early democracy in precolonial central, 42–44; legacy of state weakness and, 292–95; percentage of countries that are democratic, 291; Self-Assessment of Democracy index, 292–94; tax revenues and, 293–94
—specific peoples/places: Azande, the, 53–54; the Kuba kingdom, 44; Lwimbi, the, 43; Songye people of Kasai, 43–44; Tshiluba speakers of Kasai, 43
—West, geographic scale as an obstacle to governance in, 265
African Americans, 19, 255, 342n70
Afrobarometer project, 291–92
agriculture
—innovation in, 184–86
—intensity of: autocracy and, 10; bureaucracy and, 76–77; factors determining, 77–78; techniques increasing, 87–90
—matrilocality and, 40
—political institutions and: bureaucracy, 75–77, 83; bureaucracy and, 12; early democracy, 66–69, 75, 105–8; governance and suitability of, 65–66; political participation and female control, relationship of, 57; uncertainty about production and taxation, relationship of, 7, 63, 66
—population density and, 46, 65, 89–90
—soil (*see* soil)
—of specific peoples/places: China (*see* China, imperial, agriculture); Egypt, ancient, 76–77; England, 76–77, 107; Europe, early Western, 87–90, 105–8; the Huron, 38; Iraq, 189; the Islamic caliphate, 172, 177; Mari, 35–36; the Mississippians, 50; the Sasanians, 171–72; Sumeria, ancient, 76–77, 107; Tlaxcala, 42
—writing and, 91–93
Akbar (emperor of Mughal Empire), 286–87
Alaric, 175
Albertus, Michael, 279
Alexander Severus (emperor of Rome), 130
Alexander the Great (king of Macedonia), 36, 174
Alfonso IX (king of León), 204
Alfred the Great (king of the Anglo-Saxons), 113
Allan, Sarah, 151, 328n16
Allen, Robert, 217, 241

Amazons, the, 58–59
ancient Greece: adoption of an alphabet in, 94–95; Bronze Age civilization, collapse of, 31; ideas about government, impact in Europe of, 3, 20–21; mixed constitutions in, 8; political participation and military service, relationship of, 266; typology of rule in, 8. *See also* Athens, ancient
Aquinas, Saint Thomas, 133
Arab Agricultural Revolution, 89–90
Aragon, 128
Aristotle, 8, 20–21, 122–23
Athens, ancient: early democracy in, 5, 30–33; military mobilization and political participation in, 73; the "Old Oligarch," 3, 73; Persia, military conflicts with, 33; political participation in, 30; population of, 314n11
Augustine of Hippo, Saint, 127
Austria, 270
autocracy: democracies sliding into, 24; early democracy, as alternative to, 9–10; economic development and (*see* economic development); in imperial China (*see* China, imperial, autocracy); instability as Achilles' heel of, 23; leadership selection as a weakness of, 188–89; Middle East, emergence in, 15–16; modern democracy, element of in, 18; persistence of, 25–26; in precolonial Africa, 42–43; Prussian, 134–37, 259, 263, 268; revenue extraction in, 11–13
autocracy, early: of the Azande of precolonial Central Africa, 53–54; of the Aztec Triple Alliance, 46–48; early democracy and, distinguishing factor between, 44–45; inequality and, 59–61; of the Inkas, 48–50; of the Mississippian chiefdoms, 50–52; Philip the Fair's attempt at, 131–33; Standard Cross Cultural Sample and, 55–56; of Ur, Third Dynasty of, 45–46
Azande, kingdom of, 53–54
Aztec Empire: the Aztec Triple Alliance as early autocracy, 46–48; population of, 83–84; soil mapping by, 83–84

Bailyn, Bernard, 226–27
Baldwin, Kate, 25
Barker, Randolph, 334n15
Barry, Brian, 301
Bartels, Larry, 297
Beard, Charles, 244
Bede, 198
Belgium, 270
Bernard of Parma, 118
Besley, Tim, 312n20
Blackstone, William, 18, 213–14
Blair, Peter Hunter, 336n7
Blanton, Richard, 56
Blaydes, Lisa, 335n32
Bleck, Jaimie, 291
Blockmans, Wim, 326n76
Boas, Franz, 63
Bodin, Jean, 85
Bogart, Daniel, 213
Bonaparte, Louis-Napoléon, 274–75
Bonaparte, Napoléon, 191, 268, 275
Bonnet, Jean-Esprit, 252

Boserup, Ester, 77–78, 87, 89, 106
Bosker, Maarten, 191–92
Boucoyannis, Deborah, 312n21
Bourdieu, Pierre, 155
Branting, Hjalmar, 266
Bright, John, 197
Brutus (anti-Federalist pseudonym), 299–300
Buck, J. L., 144
bureaucracy
—agriculture and, 76–77
—in autocracies, 9
—democracy and: early democracy, 64, 74–76; as a fracture point of modern democracy, 5–6; sequencing as variable in relationship of, 76; timing of development of democratic practices and, 12
—endurance/destruction of, 10
—soil, knowledge of and increased demands for, 83
—of specific peoples/places: in ancient Egypt, 174–75; of the Aztecs, 47–48; the Carolingian attempt at, 108–12, 157; in England, 157, 210; in France, 157, 190; in imperial China (*see* China, imperial, bureaucracy); of the Inkas, 49; in the Middle East, 10, 171–72, 180; in the People's Republic of China, 306–7; Prussian, 134–37, 285; Roman, 104–5, 153; Russian, 284–85; Sasanian co-opted by Arab conquerors, 16
Buringh, Eltjo, 191–92
Byzantium, legacy from the Eastern Roman Empire, 105

Caesar, Julius, 102, 114
California, 303
Calvert, Cecilius, 233
Camargo, Diego, 41
Canaanites, development of alphabetic writing by, 95–96
Carneiro, Robert, 69
Carolingian rule, 108–12, 157
Catalonia, 128
Catholic Church: consent in exchange for taxation by, 117–18; fictitious person, precedent set regarding, 127; the Fourth Lateran Council, 117, 127, 265; *plena potestas* used to avoid mandates, 130; theory of voting/majority rule elaborated by, 264–65
Champlain, Samuel, 37
Chaney, Eric, 335n32
Charlemagne, 109–11
Charles I (king of England), 220, 222
Charles I (king of Spain), 4
China, Beiyang government, modern democracy of, 277–78
China, imperial
—agriculture: crop yields, 76–77; innovation in, 184–86; irrigation used in, 144, 146; knowledge of the soil, 13; Loess soil, 14, 106, 144, 147; military farms, system of, 187; soil mapping, 80–83; techniques, advances in, 87–88
—autocracy: development of, 13–15; establishment of by the Shang, 138–41; high-yield agriculture as an explanation for, 146–48; "hydraulic" society not an explanation for, 143–46; the Mandate of Heaven, 142–43; persistence of, 25–26; of the Song emperors, 157–58

—bureaucracy: bureaucratic density of Han China, 153; early existence of, 148–49; emergence of, 14–15; endurance of, 10, 164–65; execution of senior officials by the Hongwu emperor, 161; high-level officials, number of, 156–57; the imperial examination system/civil service exam, 154–56, 186; Qin and Han unification, significance of, 152–53; Shang, possibility of, 140–41
—economy and economic development: commercial revolution in, 124–25, 156, 306; GDP in compared to England and the Islamic Middle East, 182–83; iron production, 185; political institutions and, 185–87
—political development and institutions, 13–15; accountability of rulers, limited, 142–43, 307; assemblies, early use of, 150; consent, possible early seeking of, 141, 149–50; Europe, as alternative to, 138, 164–65; hereditary rule, early challenge to, 150–52; Loess soil and, 14, 106; population, control of, 148, 279–80; under the Qing emperors, 162–64; ruler duration, 188–89
—political resistance: the Mongol conquest, 159; Taiping Rebellion, 164; White Lotus Rebellion, 164
—taxation: collection of indirect, 306–7; knowledge of the soil and, 13; reduced under Ming emperors, 159–62; reduced under Qing emperors, 162–63; revenue extraction, rate of, 11–13, 156, 162, 204–5, 313n23; state revenues of China and England by GDP, 160–61
—war frequency, 1500–1799, 161
—writing: beginnings of, 92; complexity of, 94–95; ideograms, system of, 91
China, People's Republic of: as the bureaucratic alternative, 306–7; commercial revolution without political openness, 280–81; democratic governance, absence of, 258, 277; establishment of, 278–79; imperial state, legacy of, 278–80; land reform in, 279; legacy of assembly governance, absence of, 277–78; "people's democracy," meaning of, 281–82
circumscription, theory of, 69–71
cities/localities
—Aztec Triple Alliance as league of, 46–48
—in Europe: ability to issue long-term debt, 125–26; autonomous, 120–23; development of bureaucracies without becoming autocracies, 126; mandates to control representatives, issue of, 128–31; mixed constitutions in ancient Greek, 8; representatives of, 127–28
—Roman governance through, 104
—urbanization (*see* urbanization)
Cleisthenes, 30, 32, 42
climate: the Medieval Warm Period, 123–24; solar radiation and, 123–25
Clinton, Hillary, 275
Clovis, 108–9
Codex Mendoza (Aztecs), 46–47
Coke, Edward, 203
Colbert, Jean-Baptiste, 63
Columbian Exchange, 68–69
Columella, 85
commercial revolution: of Europe in the Middle Ages, 123–24; in imperial China, 124–25, 156, 306
communal movement, 120–23, 126
competitive authoritarianism, 24
Confucius, 81
Congleton, Roger, 236, 259, 311n5
Connecticut, colony of, 303

consent: as a basic ingredient of democracy, 4; in early democracy, 6, 29; in England, a theory of (QOT), 116, 119; Magna Carta and subsequent documents, significance of, 203–4; Mongol leaders, needed by, 158–59; Philip the Fair unconcerned with, 131–32; the *witan* in Anglo-Saxon England as a form of, 201
Constitution of Medina, 15, 168
Cortés, Hernán, 3–4, 41, 96
Cortés, Martín, 322n10
Côte d'Ivoire, 289–90, 294
Cotton, John, 228–29
Cowen, Tyler, 304
Cromwell, Oliver, 222
Cromwell, Thomas, 209–11
Crone, Patricia, 170

Dahl, Robert, 34, 301
Dalan, Rinita, 317n83
Dan Zhu, 150
Darius II (king of Persia), 35
Dasgupta, Aditya, 272
debt, cities able to issue long-term before monarchs in Europe, 125–26
Decoster, Caroline, 327n103
democracy: bureaucracy and, sequencing as variable in relationship of, 76 (*see also* sequencing); decline and rise of, 259, 288; inheriting a state as bad for, 15–16; meaning of as used by the Greeks, 4; measures of, 256–57; military, 73; origins of, 3–4; questions about, 4; science and, 186; standing armies and, 136; "Swiss" pattern of, 35
democracy, alternative visions of: economic development and, 22–23; inequality and, 21–22; political ideas and, 20–21
democracy, early, 4–5
—agriculture and, 66–69, 75, 105–8 (*see also* agriculture)
—autocracy as the alternative to, 9–10 (*see also* autocracy)
—bureaucracy and, 64, 74–76 (*see also* bureaucracy)
—common elements of, 29–30, 64
—definition of, 8
—exit options and, 69–72 (*see also* exit option(s))
—inequality and, 59–61
—institutions of, continuing impact of, 25
—military needs and, 72–74
—modern democracy and, differences between, 5–6
—as a naturally occurring condition, 5, 44, 56, 104
—origins of, 6–7
—population density and, 71–72
—reasons for decline in, 7
—revenue extraction in, 11–13
—scale, issue of, 33, 48 (*see also* scale)
—as a solution to the problems of exit and uncertainty, 63–64
—of specific peoples/places: Africa, precolonial Central, 42–44; Athens, ancient, 30–33 (*see also* Athens, ancient); in Europe, 10–13 (*see also* England, medieval; France); the Huron, 37–41 (*see also* Huron, the); the Iberian Peninsula, 175–76; India, ancient, 36–37; Mari, 34–36 (*see*

also Mari (Mesopotamian kingdom)); the Middle East, 15–16, 166–68; Mongols, the, 158–59; the Tlaxcalans, 41–42 (*see also* Tlaxcala/Tlaxcalans); in the United States (*see* United States, colonial assemblies); Visigoths, the, 175–76
—Standard Cross Cultural Sample and, 55–56
—weak states and, 78
—writing, effect of, 93–94
democracy, future of, 23–24; new democracies, 24–25; as an ongoing experiment, 24, 296–97; optimism and pessimism, reasons for, 307–8; persistence of autocracy, 25–26; in the United States, 26–28
democracy, modern
—anxieties about: backsliding, 296; distant state, keeping citizens connected with (*see* distant state, problem of); fracture points of, 5–6, 17, 297–98; strong state/executive power, 298, 303–5
—arrival of, 17–20
—early democracy and, differences between, 5–6
—as an ongoing experiment, 24, 296
—spread of, 256, 295; in Africa, 288–95 (*see also* Africa); charting the, 256–59; in Europe (*see* Europe, Western, modern democracy, spread of); Huntington's waves of democratization, 257–58; in India, 285–87
—in the United States (*see* United States, modern democracy)
de Montfort, Simon, 128
Denmark, 270
de Soto, Hernando, 51–52
Diamond, Jared, 311n10
Dincecco, Mark, 338n59
Diocletian (emperor of Rome), 104, 153, 174
distant state, problem of, 299; connecting with citizens, public opinion/newspaper circulation and, 249–53, 302; distrust and, 300–301; early democracy, return to, 302–3; large republics, as an issue with, 299–300; solutions for distrust, 301–3
distrust in government: size and level of government and, 300–301; solutions for, 301–3
Domar, Evsey, 237
Duby, Georges, 107
Dunn, John, 297
Dutch Republic: decentralization of institutions, 298; economic development and political structure in, relationship of, 23, 197, 217–19; England and, comparison of governance in, 216–19; mandates for representatives in, 129, 207; patents issued over time, 217–19; principle of unanimity in, 39

economic development: annual growth rate when switching from autocracy to democracy, 333n3; autocracy and, 181, 183–86; Chinese autocracy and, 186–87; democracy and, 22–23, 181, 192–93; in the Dutch Republic, 217–19; in England (*see* England, medieval, economic development; England, modern, economic development); European early democracy and, 190–92; European weak autocracy and, 189–90; the Great Divergence, GDP and urbanization data tracking, 182–83; innovation, autocracy and, 184–86; Islamic autocracy and, 187–89; type of growth, autocracy and, 183–84
Edward I (king of England), 85, 116, 119, 128, 206, 335n38
Edward III (king of England), 208
Edward the Elder (king of England), 199

Egypt, ancient: bureaucracy and taxation in, 174–75; circumscription and state formation in, 69, 174; crop yields in, 76–77; invader control of, 174; land measurement in, 86; level of inequality in, 60–61
Egypt, poll tax imposed by Islamic conquerors, 332n30
Elizabeth I (queen of England), 211, 227
Elton, Geoffrey, 209
Elvin, Mark, 329n30
Engels, Friedrich, 40, 73
England, Anglo-Saxon: central political institutions, 114–16, 200–201; the Danegeld, 114–15, 200; the invasion, impact of, 198; literacy in, 202; local institutions, 113–14, 198–200; taxation, 114–15, 200, 203; women, political influence of, 269
England (as Britannia): Roman rule and immediate aftermath, 113, 197–98
England, medieval
—agriculture: crop yields, 76–77, 107; land measurement, 86–87
—bureaucracy: high-level bureaucratic officials, number of, 157; Tudor reforms creating a, 210
—economic development: GDP in compared to China and the Islamic Middle East, 182–83; innovation as measured by number of patents awarded, 217–19; political institutions and, 217; subsistence ratio for unskilled workers in London, 241; wages and welfare ratios, 234–35, 240–41
—migration to North American colonies, inducements for, 230–31, 234–36
—parliament: invention of a new kind of, 197; "King-in-Parliament" as an assertion of supremacy, 210; mandates, avoidance of, 130–31, 206–9; the "Model Parliament," 128, 208
—political development and institutions: centralized executive in, 298; collective action and resistance to Henry VIII, 28; the Diggers, 221, 260; the Dutch Republic and, comparison of, 216–19; the Levellers, 18, 221–23, 229, 234, 260; Magna Carta, 202–4, 206; modern democracy, delay in attaining, 219–20, 223–24; New Model Army, 220–23; ruler duration, 188–89; the state inherited by the Normans, 201–2; Tudor despotism/good government, question of, 209–11; universal male suffrage, conflict over, 220–23
—taxation: Domesday Book, 85–87, 162, 201–2; "heavy exactions" of King John, 204–6; revenue extraction, level of, 11–12, 204–6; state revenues of China and England by GDP, 160–61
—tobacco, importation and consumption of, 239
—war frequency in, 161
England, modern
—economic development: bond yields, expansion of the franchise and, 272; iron production in, 185; property rights and, 219; turnpike Acts and, 213, 219
—parliament: local interests, two faces of insulation from, 212–16; the "Reform Parliament," 210; supremacy of, autocratic executive and, 214–16; supremacy of, establishment of, 211–12; supremacy of, high state capacity and, 212–14
—political development and institutions: centralized executive in, 298; the Glorious Revolution of 1688, 211–12; "Great Reform Act" of 1832, 18, 255; modern democracy, emergence of, 17–18; suffrage, delay in expanding, 219–20, 255; women's suffrage, 269–70
—taxation, administration of, 262–63. *See also* United Kingdom
Erickson, Clark, 321n30
Europe, Eastern: Byzantium, 105; Hungary, 204
Europe, Western
—agriculture: political development and, 105–8; techniques, lagging in, 87–88, 106–8; techniques, reasons for lagging in, 88–90

—bureaucracy: Carolingian attempt to establish, 108–12; central state, weakness of, 125–26; destruction after the fall of Rome, implications of, 10
—economic development: democracy and, relationship of, 22; early democracy and, 190–92; government debt, fears about the impact of democracy on, 272; weak autocracy and, 189–90
—modern democracy, spread of, 257–60; elite's fears not realized, 271–74, 297–98; ideas, the American Revolution and, 260; legacy of assemblies/voting and, 264–65; legacy of weak states and, 262–64; suffrage expansion, military conscription and, 265–68; voting behavior of peasants, 274–76; voting rights for women, 268–71; wealth and, 261–62
—political development and institutions: democracy in, backwardness and, 4; development of the aristocracy and, 14–15; England on a separate track, 113, 197 (*see also* England, medieval, political development and institutions); factors explaining the uniqueness of, 10–13; Greek ideas about government, impact of, 3, 20–21; inequality and democracy, 21
—Roman Empire, legacy of fall of, 104–5
—soil: lack of knowledge of, 81, 84–85
—taxation and knowledge of, 13; taxation: by the Anglo-Saxons, 114–15; by the Carolingians, 109; the Danegeld, 114–15, 200; democracy and, 271–72; by the English (*see* England, Anglo-Saxon, taxation; England, medieval, taxation; England, modern, taxation); by the French (*see* France, taxation; Philip the Fair (king of France)); by Philip the Fair (king of France), 132–33; revenue extraction, level of, 11–13, 133; in Rome and the Germanic kingdoms, 105; "the king must live of his own" hence no raising revenue, 133
—technology: backwardness compared to China and the Middle East, 79–80; firearms, 80, 96–97. *See also* Dutch Republic; England, Anglo-Saxon; England, medieval; England, modern; France; Italy
Evans-Pritchard, E. E., 42–43, 53, 317n93
exit option(s): in Arabia, 15; in autocracies, 46, 48; circumscription *versus*, 69–71; consensual rule and, 7; early democracy and, 69–72, 321n26; in early dynastic China, 147; labor scarcity and, 237; land abundance and, 236, 238; level of taxation and, 63; in nonhuman species, 63; in North America, 18–19, 234, 236–38, 241; population density and, 71–72; of Russian peasants, loss of, 284; slavery and, 19, 236–38

Fairfax, Thomas, 222
Fargher, Lane, 56
firearms, European technological advantage regarding, 80, 96–97
Fortes, Meyer, 42–43
France
—Africa, supporting autocracies in, 290
—Champs de Mars, building of, 51
—economy/economic development: per capita GDP in 1870, 22; wealth and democratization in, 261–62; wealth inequality and expansion of the suffrage in, 272–74
—political development and institutions: absolutism not present in, 263–64; blocking power of local interests prior to the Revolution, 219; colonization in North America, 241–42; Estates General, mandates for representatives in, 129–30, 132, 244–45; Estates General, no meeting of 1614–1789, 134, 244, 259; peasant voting behavior, 274–76; rule by Philip the Fair (*see* Philip the Fair (king of France)); ruler duration in Capetian, 188–89; voting within individual towns in, 265; women's suffrage in, 270
—taxation: revenue extraction, 11–13, 313n23; tax rates, 274
—war frequency in, 161
franchise, the. *See* suffrage

Franklin, Benjamin, 252–53
Frederick William “the Great Elector” (Elector of Brandenburg and Prussia), 135–36
Freedom House, 291
Friedrich Wilhelm III (king of Prussia), 268

Galbraith, H. V., 336n14
Galor, Oded, 65, 67–68
Gambia, the, 291
gender: matrilocal origin hypothesis, 40. *See also* women
Genghis Khan, 158–59
geometry and the ability to survey, 86–87
George William (Elector of Brandenburg), 135
Germany: level of trust in government in, 300. *See also* Prussia
Gerry, Elbridge, 244, 247, 250, 253, 255
Ghana, 24, 289, 291–92, 294
Gibson, Charles, 316n56
Gilgamesh, Epic of, 34
Goldstone, Jack, 212
Goody, Jack, 91–92
Great Britain. *See* England, modern
Greece: ancient (*see* ancient Greece); level of trust in government in, 300
Guizot, François, 101–2, 123, 327n82

Haber, Stephen, 311n10
Hamilton, Alexander, 249, 341n60
Hammurabi of Babylon, 35
Hariri, Jacob, 305
Henry VI (king of England), 161
Henry VIII (king of England), 28, 206, 209–10, 337n45
heredity, importance of, 29–30
Herodotus, 58, 85–86, 95, 167
Hill, Christopher, 221
Hillyard, Nicholas, 218
Hincmar (bishop of Reims), 112
Hoffman, Philip, 80, 96–97
Holt, J. C., 204
Honorius III (pope), 118
Houphouët-Boigny, Félix, 289
Hsia, R. Po-chia, 330n56
Hungary, Golden Bull of 1222, 204
Huntington, Samuel, 226, 257–58, 290–92
Huron, the, 3–5; agricultural practices and the exit option, 70–71; central councils attended only by chiefs, 8; clan structure of, 32; early democracy of, 20, 37–41, 55, 129; map of area occupied by, 38; as mobile society, 69; women, political role of, 39–41, 57

Iberian Peninsula: governance of from the fall of Rome to the expulsion of the Muslims, 175–78; mandates for representatives in, 129–30. *See also* Spain
Iliad (Homer), 31

India: ancient, early democracy in, 36–37; democratic governance, establishment in, 258; political development in, 285–87
Indus Valley, independent writing system developed in, possibility of, 92
inequality: democracy and, 21–22; early democracy *vs*. autocracy and, relationship of, 59–61; wealth, expansion of the suffrage and, 272–74
Inka Empire: early autocracy of, 48–50; knots on strings system in place of writing used by, 91, 94–95; population of, 241
Innocent III (pope), 117–18, 127, 130, 265
Internet, the, 186, 280–81, 302
Iraq: agriculture in, 189; ISIS control of, 305; revenue extraction in, 11–13, 204–5, 332n30
Ireton, Henry, 222
Iroquois, the: agricultural practices and the exit option, 71; clan structure of, 32; knowledge of/sources on, 37–38; military and political participation, linkage between, 73; as mobile society, 69; women, political role of, 40, 57
Islam: democracy and, 166, 179 (*see also* Middle East, Islamic)
Italy
—city republics: Aristotle's influence on, 122–23; features of early democracy in, 303; Florence as an exception to collective rule, 126; rediscovery of Greek ideas, impact of, 20
—communal movement: development of, 120–21, 126; reasons for, 121–23
—women's suffrage in, 270
Ivan IV, "The Terrible" (tsar of Russia), 283

Jacobsen, Thorkild, 34, 36
James I (king of England), 218, 239
Japan, 265, 278
Jay, John, 249, 253
John (king of England), 202–3
Johnson, Noel D., 319n6
Jones, A. H. M., 324n32
Jorgensen, Joseph, 68, 71
Justinian Code, 116–17

Kawad (Sasanian Empire), 171
Keightley, David, 140–41
Khusrau (Sasanian Empire), 171
Koran, principle of *shura* in, 168–69
Kourouma, Ahmadou, 288
Koyama, Mark, 319n6
Krause, Victor, 111
Krupenikov, I. A., 322n13
Kublai Khan, 158–59
Kuhn, Dieter, 330n68
Kwakiutl, the, 63

labor coercion, theory of, 236–37
Latin America, 240–42
leadership succession: caliphate in al-Andalus, undoing of, 177; solved by Christian forces in Iberia, 178; as a weakness of autocracies, 188–89

Leo VI (emperor of Byzantium), 105
le Page du Pratz, Antoine Simon, 52
Levi, Margaret, 322n8
Levin, Yuval, 301
Lewis, Mark Edward, 150
Lilburne, John, 222
Lin, Justin, 185–86
Lipset, Seymour Martin, 22, 261
Louis Philippe (king of France), 275
Louis XIV (king of France), 217, 263
Lowie, Robert, 30
Lugard, Frederick, 42–43
Lü Gong-zhu, 143

Macchiavelli, Niccolò, 85, 303
Madison, James, 27, 247, 249–50, 253, 255, 299–301
Ma Duanlin, 83
Magna Carta, 12
Malthus, Thomas, 77
mandates: England, absence of in, 130–31, 206–9; France, presence then absence of in, 244–45; in medieval Europe, 128–30, 206–7; in modern democracies, absence of, 18, 245–46; United States, absence of in the, 244
Manin, Bernard, 313n28
Mansbridge, Jayne, 303
Mao Zedong, 277–79, 281
Mari (Mesopotamian kingdom): early democracy of, 34–36, 55; mixed constitution of, 8
Marshall, Catherine, 317–18n96
Marx, Karl, 40, 73
Maryland, colony of, 233
Massachusetts, colony of, 228–29
Mather, Increase, 339n10
McCormick, John, 303
McKitterick, Rosamond, 110
Mencius, 143
Mesoamerica: the Aztec Empire (*see* Aztec Empire); high populations in, 241; the Inka Empire (*see* Inka Empire); Teotihuacan site, level of inequality at, 60–61; writing, beginnings of, 92
Mesopotamia: ebb and flow of democracy and autocracy in, 35; Mari (*see* Mari (Mesopotamian kingdom)); Ur, Third Dynasty of (*see* Ur, Third Dynasty of). *See also* Sumeria
Metcalfe, Charles, 287
Middle East, Islamic
—agriculture, 172, 177; innovation in, 184
—bureaucracy: endurance of, 10, 180; Sasanian creation of, 171–72
—economic development: GDP in compared to England and China, 182–83; political instability and, 187–89; political institutions and, 185
—political development and institutions: in al-Andalus (the Iberian peninsula), 175–78; the Circle of Justice as a legitimating ideology, 173, 180; city as a fictitious person, no embrace of idea of, 127; democracy in, fate of, 15–16, 178–80, 264; dynastic rule, shift to, 169–70; Egypt,

inheritance from, 174–75; Islam, arrival of, 15; ruler duration, 188–89; *shura* as indication of consultation in governance, 168–70; a state, inheriting, 172
—taxation: knowledge of the soil and, 13; revenue extraction, level of, 11–13, 204–5
Middle East, pre-Islamic: early democracy, 166–68; mandates in, 207; Sasanian Empire (*see* Sasanian Empire)
military activity: expansion of, expansion of tax capacity and, 162; mass conscription, political rights and, 153, 265–68
military democracy, 73
Mississippian chiefdoms: agricultural practices and the exit option, 70–71; autocracy of, 50–52; Coosa, the, 51–52; Natchez, the, 52; as relatively less mobile society, 69; writing, absence of, 92–93
modern democracy. *See* democracy, modern
Mongols, the, 158–59
Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de, 101
Moosvi, Shireen, 344n81
Morgan, Edmund, 236
Morgan, Lewis Henry, 40, 73
Muawiyah (caliph), 170
Muhammad, 15, 168
Murdock, George Peter, 54, 318n96

Native American societies: council governance and population density, relationship of, 72; political differences between Northeast and Southeast, the circumscription theory and, 70–71. *See* also Huron, the; Iroquois, the; Mississippian chiefdoms
Needham, Joseph, 185–86
Netherlands, the, 270. *See also* Dutch Republic
Neustadt, Richard, 304
New France, 241–42
Niger, 292
Nikolova, Elena, 236
Nkrumah, Kwame, 289
North, Douglass, 62, 337n49
North, Frederick, 2nd Earl of Guilford (Lord North), 216
North America: early democracy in, 17–19 (*see also* Huron, the; Iroquois, the); New France, 241–42; population of, 241; slavery in, labor scarcity and, 19 (*see also* United States, slavery); the United States (*see* United States); universal male suffrage in, 18–19 (*see also* United States, suffrage)

Obama, Barack, 305
Odyssey (Homer), 31
Old Life of Lebuin, 103, 112
oligarchy, definition of, 8
Olsson, Ola, 319n7, 344n78
Onorato, Massimilliano, 342n23
oriental despotism, 138
Ostrogorski, Moisey, 269
Ostrogorsky, George, 105
Ostrom, Elinor, 144
Overton, Richard, 222

Özak, Ömer, 65, 67–68

Paik, Christopher, 319n7
Pan Geng, 141, 149–50
Parker, Ann, 237
Passeron, Jean-Claude, 155
Pauketat, Timothy, 317n82
Pennsylvania Gazette, 252–53
Persia, 33
Persson, Torsten, 312n20
Peter (king of Aragon), 204
Peter the Great (tsar of Russia), 282–83, 285
Philip the Fair (king of France): assembly politics as used by, 131–32; autocracy, attempt at, 27, 131–33; bureaucracy under, inadequacy of, 157, 190; mandates in the Estates General, attempt to avoid, 207; property rights, trampling on, 190; taxation under, 130, 132–33, 313n23; weakness of governance under, 12–13
Phillip Augustus (king of France), 336n25
Phoenicians, development of alphabetic writing by, 95
Pierce, William L., 247
Pliny the Elder, 102
Pocock, J. G. A., 20, 122
Pole, J. R., 227–28
political participation: in Ancient Athens, 31–33; in early democracy, 30; episodic, 5, 17; military service and, 73; in modern *vs*. early democracy, 17; in republics of ancient India, 37; of women (*see* women)
political representation: in the assemblies of the North American colonies, 227, 229, 233; the civil service in dynastic China as a form of, 154; development in Europe *vs*. the Middle East, 16; development of in Europe (*see* political representation in Europe, development of); in early democracy, 6; mandates and (*see* mandates); theory of, European, 265
political representation in Europe, development of: the Anglo-Saxons, 115–16; assemblies, rise and decline of, 134; autonomous cities, representatives of, 127–28; bureaucracy, backwardness of, 137; Carolingian assemblies, 112; consent as a step towards, 116–19; French thought on, two camps of, 101–2; mandates, issue of, 128–31; Marklo assemblies, 103–4; the Roman inheritance and, 104–5; Tacitus on the Germans, 101–3
Polybius, 244
population density: agricultural development in medieval Europe and, 89–90; agriculture and, 46, 65; of the Aztecs, 46; central government/the state and, 65, 69; council governance and, 71–72; exit option and, 48; of the Mississippians, 50
Prak, Maarten, 338n59
Prince, Thomas, 222
Principles in the Administration of the Islamic State, 180
Pritchard, James, 341n50
Proudhon, Pierre Joseph, 276
Prussia, 134–37, 259, 263, 268, 285
Puyi (child emperor of China), 277

Qin Shi Huangdi (emperor of China), 151
quod omnes tangit (QOT), 116–19, 132, 142

representation. *See* political representation
Republican Party, "Contract with America," 18
revenue. *See* taxation
Reynolds, Susan, 126
Rhode Island, colony of, 303
Rhys Davids, Thomas, 36–37
Ricci, Matteo, 154
Roach, Levi, 201
Roderigo de Tordesillas, 129–30
Rokkan, Stein, 327n82
Rolfe, John, 239
Roman Empire: Britannia, rule and loss of, 197; bureaucracy in, 104–5, 153; Egypt, control of, 174; *plenam potestatem agendi* in, 130; Sasanian Empire, struggle for regional power with, 168, 170
Ross, Marc Howard, 318n99, 318n101, 318n103
Rossiter, Clinton, 299
Rudolph (emperor of Habsburg), 116
rule/rulers: ancient Greek typology of, 8; collaborative rule, need for revenue and, 7; duration of in six dynasties, 188–89; military needs and, 72–74; problems of, revenue and exit as, 63; succession, problem of, 178, 188–89; weakness of in Europe of the middle ages, 11–13
Russia: bureaucratic state built in, 284–85; democratic governance, absence of, 258, 282; early assemblies in, 282–84. *See also* Soviet Union
Rwanda, 290

Sanday, Peggy, 318n101
Sandys, Edwyn, 230–31
Sasanian Empire, 16, 168, 170–73, 180, 188–89
scale: in autocracies, 46, 48; bureaucracy and, 74; bureaucracy without autocracy in autonomous cities due to, 126; in dynastic China, 152; in early democracy, 33, 48; geographic as a barrier to governance, 265; the problem of in modern democracy, 27
SCCS. *See* Standard Cross Cultural Sample
Scheidel, Walter, 104, 312n22
Scheve, Kenneth, 342n23
Schwartzberg, Melissa, 265
Schwartzenberg, Count, 135
science: democracy and, 186; experiential *vs*. experimental, 185–86
Scott, James, 10
Sen, Amartya, 286
sequencing: bureaucracy without autocracy in autonomous cities due to, 126; in China, 26, 138; state/democratic development and, 76, 263, 294, 305; Tudor despotism and, 209, 210–11
Shakya, the, 36–37
Sharma, J. P., 37
Shays, Daniel, 253
Shulgi (ruler of Ur), 45
Shun, 150–51
Sieyès, Abbé de (Emmanuel Joseph Sièyes), 245
Silva, Alan, 339n10
Skinner, Quentin, 326n79
Skocpol, Theda, 346n7

soil: Aztec mapping of, 83–84; Chinese mapping of, 80–83; Europe, relative lack of knowledge in, 81, 84–85; knowledge of, taxation and, 13, 80–81, 83; Loess, 14, 106, 144; mapping of and knowledge of geometry, 86–87; understanding and mapping, 80–85
Solon, 32
Soviet Union, 183, 290. *See also* Russia
Spain: forced labor used in the colonies, 241–42; mandates, attempts to avoid, 207; subsistence ratio for unskilled workers in Valencia at the time of colonization, 241; wages in at the time of colonization, 241. *See also* Iberian Peninsula
Spanish America, 240–42
Spence, Jonathan D., 331n88
Spencer, Herbert, 73
Squire, Peverill, 340n25
Standard Cross Cultural Sample (SCCS): bureaucracy and political scale, relationship of, 74; caloric potential and governance, relationship of, 65–66; calories out of the ground before and after the Columbian Exchange, 69; construction of, 54–55; crops and writing, relationship of, 92; early democracy and autocracy across the globe, 55–56; female political participation, 57–59; inequality and form of government, relationship of, 59–61; population density and council presence, relationship of, 72; warrior prestige and council governance, relationship of, 73–74; writing, existence of and distance from selected locations, 93; writing and form of government, relationship of, 93
state, the: agricultural suitability and formation of, 65–66; circumscription theory and formation of, 69–70; definition of, 62. *See also* rule/rulers
Stone, Lawrence, 209, 337n45
Strayer, Joseph, 13, 133
Stubbs, William (bishop of Chester, then Oxford), 113, 116, 202, 209
Stung Serpent, 52
Sudan, 292
suffrage: African Americans and, 19; in England, 219–23, 255, 269–70; military conscription and, 153, 265–68; in the United States (*see* United States, suffrage); universal male conceived in England, implemented in North America, 18–19; wealth inequality and expansion of, 272–74; for women, 266, 268–71
Sumeria, ancient: advanced mathematics and the mapping of land in, 86; crop yields in, 76–77, 107; cuneiform invented in, 91–92; Ur, Third Dynasty of (*see* Ur, Third Dynasty of)
Su Song, 186
Swann, Julian, 264
Sweden, 266, 270
Switzerland, 268

Tacitus, 20, 101–4, 112, 114
taxation
—consent, in exchange for, 116–19
—exit if too heavy, potential for, 63
—fairness of, 83
—inclusive conception of, 62–63
—knowledge of the soil and, 13, 80–81, 83 (*see also* soil)
—military activity and, 162
—specific peoples/places: the Aztecs, 46–48; in China (*see* China, imperial, taxation); by communes, 121; in England (*see* England, Anglo-Saxon, taxation; England, medieval,

taxation; England, modern, taxation); in Europe of the middle ages *vs*. China and the Middle East, 11–13; in France (*see* France, taxation; Philip the Fair (king of France)); the Iberian Peninsula, 176–77; the Incas, 49; in Mari, 35; the Middle East, 11–13, 173; Mughal India, 286–87; the Sasanian Empire, 171; Western Europe (*see* Europe, Western, taxation)
—tax farming as a potential substitute for early democracy, 64
—uncertainty about production and: relationship of, 7, 63, 66; solutions to the problem of, 63–64
—wealth of a society and level of, relationship between, 60
Taylor, John, 248–49, 296–97, 341n60
technology: for agricultural intensification, 87–90; democracy and forward progress, traditional view of, 79; as undermining early democracy in favor of bureaucracy, 79, 97
Teele, Dawn, 270–71
Teotihuacan site in Mesoamerica, level of inequality at, 60–61
Thapar, Romila, 37
Theophanes, 170
Thirty Years' War, 135
Tierney, Brian, 127
Tilly, Charles, 327n82
Tlaxcala/Tlaxacalans, 3–4, 20, 41–42, 60
Tocqueville, Alexis de, 228, 346n7
Todar Mal, 286
Tooker, Elisabeth, 41, 315n40
Tribute of Yu, 13, 80–81, 83, 139, 144, 328n1
Trigger, Bruce, 40, 316n51
Trump, Donald, 275, 305
Tuden, Arthur, 317–18n96
Tufte, Edward, 301

Uganda, 295
United Kingdom: Africa, supporting autocracies in, 290; postal service in, 250; women's suffrage in, 270. *See also* England, modern
United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 65
United States
—Africa, supporting autocracies in, 290
—colonial assemblies: as early democracy, 226–28, 243, 303; Maryland, 233; Massachusetts, 228–29; Virginia, 230–33
—economic development: labor scarcity, the colonial suffrage and, 234–36; labor scarcity, slavery and, 236–39; markets, functioning of, 23
—modern democracy: arrival of, 19–20, 243–44; central power to tax, 247–48; connecting with citizens (*see* distant state, problem of); early critics of, 248–49; future of, 26–28; invention of compared to political development in England, 254–55; mandates, representatives not bound by, 244; strong state, risk of, 304–5
—newspapers: circulation over time, 251; connecting with the people through, 249–53; fake news, problem of, 252–53; number of copies, estimates of, 251–52; the Postal Service Act and expansion of, 252
—political development and institutions: annual elections, issue of, 223, 246–47; Articles of Confederation, 243; Constitution of 1787, 19, 26–27, 243–44, 246–49; executive power, growth of, 298, 304–5; the Federalist Papers, 21, 249–50, 299; Postal Service Act of 1792, 250–52; Shays' Rebellion, 252; trust in government and the media, level of, 300–301

—slavery: in colonial Georgia, 239–40; democracy and, presence of shared conditions for, 225, 238; land abundance/labor scarcity and, 19, 236–40; tobacco farming and, 239
—suffrage: broad, factors supporting, 234–36; in colonial Massachusetts, 228–29, 236; in colonial Virginia, 236; near universal white male in the colonies, 223; women's in western states, 271
—taxation: in colonial Massachusetts, 229; in colonial Virginia, 231, 233; under the Constitution, 248; for joint ventures of the colonies, 247–48
—tobacco cultivated in, 239
Ur, Third Dynasty of: advanced mathematics and land mapping in, 86; as early autocracy, 45–46; early written documents in, 91
urbanization: rates of in England, China, and the Middle East, 182–83; representative assemblies and, 191–92
Uthman (caliph), 169

van Bavel, Bas, 219, 355n40
van de Walle, Nicolas, 291
van Riel, Arthur, 338n59
Vansina, Jan, 43
van Zanden, Jan Luiten, 191–92, 338n59
Varlet, Jean-François, 245
Vehrencamp, Sandra, 63
Verbeken, Auguste, 44
Vercingetorix, 102
Virginia, colony of, 230–33
Virginia Company of London, 230–31
Visigoths, the, 175–76
Vortigern, 198

Walpole, Robert, 214–15
Walwyn, William, 222
Watson, Andrew, 184
Weber, Max, 10
Weingast, Barry, 337n49
Wen (emperor of China), 154
Western Europe. *See* Europe, Western
White, Lynn, 324n22
Wickham, Chris, 324n16
Wiesehofer, Josef, 332n19
Wilkes, John, 216
William of Orange, 212
William the Conqueror (king of England), 201–2, 336n14
Wilson, Suzanne F., 318n96
Winthrop, John, 228, 339n10
Wittfogel, Karl, 143–44, 145
Wolitsky, Alexander, 237
women: absence from formal politics in ancient Athens, 32; of the Huron, political influence of, 39–41; of the Iroquois, political influence of, 40; political participation in republics of ancient India,

37; political participation in SCCS societies, 57–59; voting rights for, 266, 268–71; warfare, participation in, 58
writing: alphabets versus more complex systems, 94–96; definition of, 91; demand and supply elements of, 9; democratization and, question of, 95–96; distance argument regarding, 323n36; early democracy, effect on, 93–94; importance of, 90–91; origins of, 91–93

Xenophon, 85

Yao, 150–51
Yazid (caliph), 170
Young, Crawford, 345n87
Yu the Great, 13, 80–81, 139, 144–45, 151

Zambia, 291
Zheng, Xiaowei, 278
Zhenzong (emperor of China), 184
Zhu Yuanzhang, 159, 187
Ziblatt, Daniel, 272

THE PRINCETON ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

Joel Mokyr, Series Editor

Recent titles

Going the Distance: Eurasian Trade and the Rise of the Business Corporation 1400–1700, Ron Harris

Trade in the Ancient Mediterranean: Private Order and Public Institutions, Taco Terpstra

Dark Matter Credit: The Development of Peer-to-Peer Lending and Banking in France, Philip T. Hoffman, Gilles Postel-Vinay, and Jean-Laurent Rosenthal

The European Guilds: An Economic Analysis, Sheilagh Ogilvie

The Winding Road to the Welfare State: Economic Insecurity and Social Welfare Policy in Britain, George R. Boyer

The Mystery of the Kibbutz: Egalitarian Principles in a Capitalist World, Ran Abramitzky

Unequal Gains: American Growth and Inequality since 1700, Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey G. Williamson

Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey since 1820, Şevket Pamuk

The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century, Walter Scheidel

The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War, Robert J. Gordon

Brazil in Transition: Beliefs, Leadership, and Institutional Change, Lee J. Alston, Marcus André Melo, Bernardo Mueller, and Carlos Pereira

The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland, 1850–1914, Timothy W. Guinnane

Fragile by Design: The Political Origins of Banking Crises and Scarce Credit, Charles W. Calomiris and Stephen H. Haber

The Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility, Gregory Clark

Why Did Europe Conquer the World?, Philip T. Hoffman

Lending to the Borrower from Hell: Debt, Taxes, and Default in the Age of Philip II, Mauricio Drelichman and Hans-Joachim Voth

Power to the People: Energy in Europe over the Last Five Centuries, Astrid Kander, Paolo Malanima, and Paul Warde

Cities of Commerce: The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250–1650, Oscar Gelderblom

Why Australia Prospered: The Shifting Sources of Economic Growth, Ian W. McLean

The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70–1492, Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein

Creating Wine: The Emergence of a World Industry, 1840–1914, James Simpson

Distant Tyranny: Markets, Power, and Backwardness in Spain, 1650–1800, Regina Grafe

The Evolution of a Nation: How Geography and Law Shaped the American States, Daniel Berkowitz and Karen B. Clay

The Roman Market Economy, Peter Temin

States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities, David Stasavage

Power over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present, Daniel R. Headrick

Unsettled Account: The Evolution of Banking in the Industrialized World since 1800, Richard S. Grossman

A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World, Gregory Clark

Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium, Ronald Findlay and Kevin H. O'Rourke

War, Wine, and Taxes: The Political Economy of Anglo-French Trade, 1689–1900, John V. C. Nye

Cultures Merging: A Historical and Economic Critique of Culture, Eric L. Jones

The European Economy since 1945: Coordinated Capitalism and Beyond, Barry Eichengreen

Feeding the World: An Economic History of Agriculture, 1800–2000, Giovanni Federico

Understanding the Process of Economic Change, Douglass C. North

The Strictures of Inheritance: The Dutch Economy in the Nineteenth Century, Jan Luiten van Zanden and Arthur van Riel

Farm to Factory: A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution, Robert C. Allen

Quarter Notes and Bank Notes: The Economics of Music Composition in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, F. M. Scherer

The Big Problem of Small Change, Thomas J. Sargent and François R. Velde

The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy, Kenneth Pomeranz

Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory, Cormac Ó Gráda

Growth in a Traditional Society: The French Countryside, 1450–1815, Philip T. Hoffman